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VACATION ISSUE

Christian Courier

A Reformed Weekly

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CHRISTIAN COURIER
PER/BX/9401/.C36 APR 16 1998

53rd Year of Publ April 17, 1998 No. 2571 $1.07

B.C. program bridges gap between natives, whites

James Kwantes

ABBOTSFORD, B.C. — In British Columbia, native land claims are a huge issue that is just beginning to get addressed. The debate is characterized by a degree of mistrust, fear and suspicion on the parts of both natives and whites.

Darryl Klassen is trying to change that. Klassen is the co-ordinator of the Mennonite Central Committee of B.C.'s Aboriginal Neighbors program, which acts as a bridge between natives and whites in the province.

"There are deep feelings and justified suspicions," says Klassen. "What is needed is an honorable and respectful relationship. Out of that can grow a genuine, two-way sharing."

The threefold purpose of the Neighbors program, which began in B.C. 10 years ago, is to build bridges between communities, to help native bands with educational and other issues, and to advocate for a solution to land claims at the political level, says Klassen.

In one recent project, the program provided assistance to a Port Hardy, Vancouver Island, native band trying to build its own school. The school was built as a longhouse.

Few venues

Klassen facilitated a recent forum in Abbotsford at which 35 people came to hear Gitxsan hereditary chief Jim Angus and chief negotiator Don Ryan describe the implications of the Dec. 11 Delgamuukw decision of the Supreme Court of Canada. More such forums are needed, Klassen asserts.

"There are so few venues where people get to hear what aboriginal people are saying, and they're reasonable people saying reasonable things," says Klassen.

ANDREW TOLSON

Darryl Klassen, the co-ordinator of MCC-BC's Aboriginal Neighbors program, at his office in Abbotsford.

Angus told the group that natives look to land claims to help heal the misery that now exists on B.C. reserves. High unemployment and social ills such as drug and alcohol addictions are big problems, he said. "We want that to change. It's not the way we want our children and grandchildren to live."

In the past, Angus said, native elders were respectful of white authority and did what they were told by ministers and government officials. As a result, the strong bond between the land and the people was broken, and B.C. natives were forced onto reserves and into dependency.

Angus refuted some of the "fear tactics" he said are being tossed around in the debate over land claims. He said bands will work with their white neighbors rather than try to kick them off native land. For example, if a band builds a school for its children, white children who live in the area will be free to attend.

Cost to pride, dignity

As for the free services people complain that natives receive, he said they came at a huge cost to the pride and dignity of the natives.

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Christians seek to share faith with Muslims

Alan Doerksen

TORONTO — In Canada, several Christian groups are finding ways to share Christianity with Muslims, but they are also finding obstacles that need to be overcome. One is misunderstandings Muslims and Christians have about each other.

COURTESY GERHARD WILCH

Christians meeting Muslims: Gerhard Wilch (far right) gets together with three Algerians (centre) and three Christian friends.

Fellowship of Faith for the Muslims (FFM), which has been working for more than 40 years in Canada, focuses on equipping Christians to pray for and share their faith with Muslims. One way FFM does this is by publishing books and pamphlets for both faith groups.

If Christians are planning a debate with Muslims, FFM can provide helpful resources and information, says Diane Dadian, chairperson of FFM. For instance, FFM will help out with a debate on July 4 in Toronto between Dr. Bill Campbell, a Christian medical missionary, and Dr. Zakir Naik, a Muslim from India, on the topic of the Koran and the Bible in the light of history and science.

But Dadian believes debates between Muslims and Christians are not the best way to discuss each other's faith.

"I don't respect debates. They degenerate," Dadian asserts. "In the heat of the moment, you want to say to your opponent, 'You're an idiot.'" Often, she says, debates become "like a basketball game. If someone makes a good point, everyone cheers."

Dadian prefers cool-headed discussions between Muslims and Christians. "Friendship evangelism" is another effective way of sharing faith with Muslims, declares Dadian. Praying for Muslims and sharing the Bible with them is also important.

But one obstacle Christians have in sharing their faith with Muslims is "Christian hesitation and paralysis," says Dadian. "Arab people are certainly more willing to talk about God." Canadians tend to be hesitant to talk about their faith, even if it is an important part of life, she says.

Prayer has long been a focus

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News

Native, white communities need reconciliation

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"A lot of that may be free, but we don't have anything," he asserted. "I don't own land and I don't own the house I live in." He told the group he couldn't use his house as equity if he wanted to get a loan to open a business.

Both Angus and Ryan emphasized the need for a reconciliation process and more dialogue between native and white communities.

Chief negotiator Don Ryan said the Delgamuukw decision of Dec. 11, 1997, was a breakthrough for the Gitxsan band because it recognizes principles such as aboriginal title and oral history. Gitxsan traditional territories are located in northcentral B.C. and are roughly the same size as the modern state of Israel.

"We wanted to demonstrate to the courts that we had our own notion of law, our own notion of title, our own notion of rights," said Ryan, who explained that the band decided to litigate in the early 1980s because there was "no movement" on land claims by the B.C. or federal governments.

Stalling may continue

Another victory was the Supreme Court declaration that governments had to negotiate "in good faith," said Ryan. In spite of the Dec. 11 decision, however, Ryan fears governments will continue to stall.

"Courts can say all the nice things, but who's going to enforce it if the Crown doesn't want to move on it?" he noted. The immediate reaction of both the provincial and federal governments to the landmark decision was "this case has no significant impact on the land claims process," he noted.

Kevin Warkentin, an 18-year-old Bible college student who attended the forum, thought the presentations struck positive tones in contrast to some of the heated political rhetoric associated with the issue.

"Both men brought up the idea of reconciliation, which is very important in dealing with human beings," said Warkentin. "They didn't sound bitter at all. The doors are wide open, and that's kind of neat."

College instructor Bill Toews agreed and emphasized the need for more such forums.

"People need to begin to hear what the real situation is so we don't walk in the darkness," said Toews. "I liked their attitude, they don't have an attitude of 'grab all.'"

Aboriginal Neighbors co-ordinator Klassen agrees that governments will continue to stall on land claims. That path may be the "only politically viable" alternative for the B.C. government, he says.

Tough political issue

"The B.C. government is caught between a rock and a hard place. To really start addressing the issue seriously is almost like political suicide," said Klassen at the forum, noting that more than 50 bands in B.C. have not signed treaties.

The cost of negotiating treaties has increased substantially in recent years and will continue to increase. "It really has strengthened their position at the bargaining table. Ten years ago, aboriginal issues could have been settled for far less," Klassen says.

For his part, Klassen plans to continue building bridges and promoting "original thinking" as the solution to some of the land claims roadblocks.

"One thing we as a church and as Christians need to address is building trust," he explained. "We both can learn from each other, and it's very important that it's a two-way street."

Christians, Muslims share misconceptions

continued from page 1

of FFM. Several times a year, FFM publishes a prayer news bulletin in which it asks supporters to pray for Muslims and for Christians working among Muslims around the world. These bulletins contain confidential information which could endanger Christians working in sensitive areas if published.

Avoid stereotypes

Although FFM does not do international mission work, it regularly stays in touch with mission groups such as Sudan Interior Mission and Arab World Ministries which focus on outreach to Muslims.

Christians need to develop a better understanding of Muslims, insists Dadian. "There's a lot to admire in the Muslim culture. There's a real emphasis on families."

But too often, Christians see Muslims as terrorists. "Many Muslims are fed propaganda about us," she adds.

Muslims who become Christians react in different ways, Dadian says. "Some of them immediately become open about their faith. Others are worried. When a Muslim ... says he's a Christian, he has cut off his ties to family."

Dadian knows of one teenaged boy who became a Christian and was kicked out of his home by his family. For two weeks, he slept in his car, and no Christians asked about how he was doing. Finally, one Christian friend invited the boy to stay at his home.

Christians need to befriend Muslims who convert, Dadian stresses, or else these converts can be very isolated. She suggests that Christians invite Muslim friends to join them in Christmas and Easter celebrations, for instance.

Philoxenia/Hospitality Ministry is a Christian group connected with the Lutheran Church Canada. It focuses on befriending, understanding and sharing the Gospel with Asian immigrants, refugees and foreign students. Rev. Ernest Hahn, who founded the ministry with his wife, Greta, in 1978, says Philoxenia "seeks to reach out to the unreached, especially Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs."

Before starting the ministry, the Hahns worked in India as missionaries. Now they work in the Metro Toronto area where they live.

"Philoxenia" is a Greek word that Hahn describes as "the reverse of xenophobia: love for the stranger."

Philoxenia shares its vision of reaching out to Muslims by preparing and distributing literature, presenting lectures and seminars on Islam and other Asian religions, preaching in churches and encouraging congregations to become active in refugee sponsorships. Phioxenia also publishes some tracts which are used in India, Kazakhstan and other countries.

Mutual hangups

One obstacle Hahn sees as keeping Muslims from becoming Christians is their misunderstandings of Christianity.

"Is Jesus the Son of God? That's a big hangup for Muslims," Hahn explains. "The concept of God as Father is alien to Muslims. It has a potential for sexual connotations. There's significant misunderstanding about the Trinity. The Koran asks, 'How can God have a son if he doesn't have a wife?'"

Christians can help clear up these misconceptions by explaining the doctrine of the Trinity to Muslims and by encouraging them "to give a fair, unbiased reading to Scriptures," says Hahn. "Scriptures have been one of the most effective ways to reach out to Muslims."

But Christians also have misconceptions about Muslims, such as the idea that "all Muslim women are suffering and have no freedom."

The best way Christians can reach out to Muslims is "to develop friendships with Muslims, to be helpful where they can be, to try to understand the Muslim perspective on certain things," says Hahn.

Gerhard Wilch works with the Hahns and Philoxenia, building friendships with Muslims and often inviting them over for dinners and Bible studies. He has met some Muslims who have become Christians and has connected them with Iranian or Arabic-speaking churches in the Metro Toronto area. But he observes, "There are hardly any other churches reaching out to Muslims here."

Wilch believes Christians need to know more about Muslims to effectively share their faith with them. "We Christians have a lack of knowledge about Islam," he asserts. But many Muslims have Bible verses memorized which they use to 'prove' that Jesus was not the Son of God, he says.

At Brock University in St. Catharines, Ont., Peter Schuurman, the Christian Reformed campus chaplain, has been building bridges between Christians and Muslims in a different way: through a Muslim-Christian dialogue group. In January 1997, he first arranged for Muslim and Christian students to meet together to discuss their religions. But because the meetings were unstructured, they often turned into "aggressive discussions" that became "a little too confrontational," says Schuurman.

Dispelling myths

To improve the situation, a Muslim-Christian dialogue committee set up guidelines and started planning out biweekly meetings. Students who come to the meetings are now encouraged to speak about a topic that they have thought through and written a paper about.

"This is an educational opportunity," explains Schuurman. "It's not evangelistic. It's not confrontational. We're here to dispel myths."

Friendship evangelism can grow out of this group, says Schuurman. "This forum becomes a basis for relationships. Evangelism is built on friendship."

When the dialogue group first started, some Christians were excited about the opportunity to share their faith with Muslims, says Schuurman. But some grew frustrated and disillusioned after they learned that "Muslims don't convert when they hear your testimony."

One stumbling block Muslims have to Christianity is historical, explains Schuurman. "They remember the crusades like they happened yesterday." Another is that Muslims associate Christianity with Western society.

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Opinion

Is there a bias against discipline?

The following appeared as a letter to the editor of the St. Catharines *Standard*. Because it addresses the issue of bias in the media against strict discipline and authority we thought it universal enough in theme to reprint. The first school referred to, St. Catharines Collegiate, is a regular public high school situated near downtown St. Catharines; the second school, the Robert Land Academy, is a privately run, military-style boarding school for teenagers in trouble with the law or their parents and is situated in Welland, 20 kilometres south of St. Catharines. The author gave permission to reprint his letter in CC.

Roderick Barr, QC

One night last year a student from St. Catharines Collegiate was killed when struck by a locomotive. It was reported that he had been attending a party, and started home walking on the tracks. He apparently sat down to rest and heard, too late, the sound of an approaching train. He tried to get clear, but failed.

Three weeks ago, two teenage students from Robert Land Academy left the school without permission, intending to travel to British Columbia. They were on railway tracks in Burlington, apparently resting, when a train approached. They were unable to get clear in time and were killed.

The media coverage of the two similar stories was like night and day. The death of the Collegiate student was treated as the terrible tragedy it was.

The deaths of the Robert Land Academy boys were treated much differently.

Grim picture

The Southam News press coverage carried in *The Standard* presented the readers the following:

1. The boys had "escaped" from the academy.

2. Discipline there was so harsh that the boys committed suicide (this charge was later withdrawn when the locomotive engineer said the boys were trying to get clear of the train when hit).

3. The academy had police after the boys to arrest them, but the boys escaped.

4. The harshness of the discipline at the school was highlighted by charges that a student with a fracture was forced to continue to take part in physical exercise.

The picture painted by these stories sparked public outrage. One correspondent in a letter to the editor demanded a public inquiry.

I have no connection with the Academy, but in 1996 the father of one of its students arranged for eight of us who meet regularly for lunch, to spend Remembrance Day at the Academy. The impression I formed there was light years away from the picture presented by Southam News. The boys were pleasant, appeared happy, and carried themselves smartly. They lived in a well-equipped barracks which were tidy and clean. There were good athletics facilities.

The Remembrance Day ceremony featured a very creditable march past of the students to the music of the academy's band. I asked one of the members of the band how long he had been playing, and he said he had no musical training before attending the academy.

After lunch in the mess hall there was an informal discussion with the students. With the exception of one, the guests were all Second World War veterans, and the students had many good questions, politely asked. Later I was surprised to be told that 35 per cent of the students had been in trouble with the law at one time or another. Others had been sent to the academy because their families felt they needed order in their lives to achieve their full potential.

Slanted stories

I simply could not reconcile what I had seen with the Southam stories. So I called the commandant at the academy. It soon became apparent that the press stories were misleading, to say the least; for example:

1. The reference to "escape" is misleading, probably intentionally so. There is no fence around the premises, no guard, no guard dogs, no barbed wire, there is nothing physically to stop any student from walking off the premises.

2. While no attempt is made to restrain students who do not want to remain in school, the average annual dropout is six to eight per cent. The most recent figure is 5.9 per cent. This compares favorably with the dropout rate in publicly funded schools. It is significant that 94 per cent of the students elect to stay. This is inconsistent with them living in conditions of brutality.

It is also significant that the most severe punishment for misbehavior is expulsion, i.e., being required to leave the academy. In over 20 years, not more than 30 boys have been expelled out of a total of 2,000 students.

Good statistics

Well, regardless of whether the charges of brutality are true, does it do any good to require students to get up at a certain hour, sit through lectures, study in the evening, and engage in sports? Or is this some kind of a boot camp?

Consider the following:

A. While 35 per cent of students had trouble with the law before attending, only 5.8 per cent re-offended after graduation.

B. Of the 20 students graduating in 1996, 17 applied to college or university. Every single one was accepted by the institution of his first choice. All 20 students completed the OAC requirements of Grades 12 and 13.

What is the cost to the taxpayer? None. The school fees are paid by the students' families, or by scholarship. No student has been turned away due to lack of funds.

No brutality

What about the student who was forced to carry on in spite of a fracture? This boy was apparently injured in some horseplay in the barracks. He was examined by the school doctor who could find nothing wrong and was assessed fit to carry on. However the boy continued to complain and the school doctor referred him to a specialist who discovered a fracture of the arm. The handling of this case by the academy certainly could not be described as brutal. What more could be required of even a devoted parent?

One of the articles said that the fact of the boys going missing was reported to the police, and that the police unsuccessfully tried to intercept them. The articles question what rights the police had to do so. These boys being over 16 years of age had "rights." Unfortunately, exercising these rights cost them their lives.

In any event, the academy was required to treat these boys with care to be expected of a prudent parent. Would a prudent parent assume the boys were alive and well and in no need of help, and if so make no effort to find them?

Dislike restrictions

The Southam stories seem to suggest a distaste on the part of the writer for discipline. But discipline is an essential part of life. We are all under the discipline of hundreds of laws and regulations and orders from our superiors. We are also required to do many things we would rather not do — paying taxes, for example.

A person who is unable to accept discipline is simply unable to function in society. We do him or her no favor if we say he or she has rights but no responsibilities. Perhaps if the person who wrote the Southam articles had been subjected to the discipline required to learn to speak English properly, he or she would not have written that the boys "may have went to Welland." I can't reconcile the coverage of the two tragedies.

Some people have a distaste for anything touching on the military. Could this be the cause? If so, this distaste has prevented the writer from asking relevant questions or, more likely, to have caused him or her to reject any evidence not supporting the theory of pointless brutality.

Roderick Barr is a retired Ontario Supreme Court judge who lives in St. Catharines, Ont.

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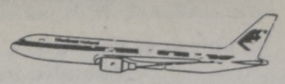

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Editorial

When my chair is vacant my day is holy

According to real estate agents, the mantra for success in selling a house is "location, location, location." I prefer another mantra when it comes to the real state of summer, and that's "vacation, vacation, vacation."

The word "vacation" is related to the word vacant, which means empty. Is a vacant church an empty church or should we speak of a vacant pulpit? Does vacation mean that your space at work is empty? Or does it mean that your head is empty of all worries and responsibilities?

A church or pulpit is vacant from the congregation's point of view, but the pastor has gone on to greener meadows and is filling his or her life with new experiences. Nothing vacant about that. The same applies to people going on holidays. Your work space may be empty from your co-workers' point of view, but your beach chair is not.

Of course, using the word "holidays" to describe your break away from work is equally weird, from an etymological point of view. What's so holy about vacations? Should your work days not be holy days?

Our pastor is on a four-month sabbatical. Does that mean he is enjoying four months of Sundays?

One could speak of a time of recess, but what is there to recede to? I would call going back to work "recess."

Gimme a break!(Or should I say gimme a vacation?) What's all this nonsense about. My mind must be on leisure and repose, and it's only April.

Did you want to know the etymological origin of the word "leisure"? I thought you'd never ask. It's related to the word "license." It means being allowed, permitted. To do what? To do whatever you want without a boss looking over your shoulder! Now there's a good word for you. The origin supports the meaning of true rest. Which is more than you can say for most words having to do with that activity which for a short period of time removes you from the curse placed on Adam and Eve's work. Not that work itself is a cursed thing, you understand. I know people who manage to import the curse into their vacations. They relax in the sweat of their brows!

Have a wonderful curse-free time of leisure this summer! **BW**

Christian Courier

Formerly known as Calvinist Contact
Founded in 1945

An independent weekly that seeks to:
◆ report on significant events in the Christian community and the world;
◆ express opinions infused by Scripture and rooted in a Reformed perspective;
◆ provide contact for the Christian community.

CHRISTIAN COURIER STAFF
Editor: Bert Witvoet **cceditor@aol.com**
Publisher: Stan de Jong **ccjournal@aol.com**
Associate Editor: Marian Van Til **cceditor2@aol.com**
Reporter, Layout: Alan Doerksen **ccjournal@aol.com**
Circulation Manager: Grace Bowman **ccsubscrip@aol.com**
Advertising, Layout: Ingrid Torn **ccadverts@aol.com**

REGIONAL REPORTERS:
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Tel: (905) 682-8311;
Fax: (905) 682-8313;
E-mail: cceditor@aol.com

You can't hurry my God

One of my favorite songs on the two Mahalia Jackson CDs I got from one of our sons a few years ago is "You Can't Hurry My God." It has a catchy rhythm and tune, and Mahalia sings it with conviction, clapping a short beat occasionally between lines as if to punctuate the statement she has just sung. The lyrics really grab me too, because, in the words of John Milton, they "justify the ways of God to men."

Mahalia sings:

You can't hurry my God,
No, no, no, you just gotta wait.
You gotta trust him and give him time,
No matter how long it takes.
He's a God you just can't hurry,
But he'll be there, don't you worry.
He may not come when you want him
But he's right on time.

This message is just the right prescription for a society that wants instant results. The idea of something not coming when we want it is not easily reconcilable to the idea of it's being right on time. Pregnant mothers know the truth of that statement, as do good craftspeople. But modern technology, especially in communication and transportation, has put us all on a fast track. "No, no, no, you just gotta wait" is a No-No to users of computers and cars!

Come, Lord Jesus

Waiting is also difficult when we find ourselves in difficult straits. We pray to God to intervene right now. But God seems to tarry. That can be hard on us. Is God not listening? Is he allowing evil forces to have their way? Is he looking the other way or is he preoccupied with other more important matters?

Mahalia's rich voice tells us not to worry. No matter when God comes, he's right on time.

Could it be that she is also hinting at the Second Coming? Black spirituals often express a longing for the new world or heaven. "Swing low, sweet chariot, comin' for to carry me home." Maybe you want Christ to come back right now. You're looking down the track to see whether a pinpoint object is slowly growing larger. Don't worry about it taking too long. Christ may not come when you want him to, but he's right on time.

I love it when people sometimes refer to God as *my God*. This shows that they completely identify with God and that they are zealous for him. There are times when such language turns me off as in: "My Bible says you can't work on Sundays." Or people talk about "My Jesus" as if they have an exclusive relationship with him. This is the language of repudiation and competition.

But when Mahalia Jackson says, "You can't hurry my God," she comes across as a wise spokesperson for God. She has earned the wisdom of knowing that you can't hurry this God because she knows from experience that he always comes through even though the signs point against it.

She once wrote: "The Lord took me, and I was nothing, and he put me up. If the Lord can bring me this far — take me out of the wash tubs and off my knees scrubbing other people's floors — then he can do as much and more for others." I don't mind a woman like her telling me not to hurry *her* God.

Loving empathy

Mahalia's identification with God reminds me of a recitative in the *St. Matthew Passion* by Johann Sebastian Bach:

Ah! If my love thy stay could be,
If I could weigh thy grief, and share it,
Could make it less, or help thee bear it,
How gladly would I watch with thee!

This is followed by an aria that starts with:

I would beside my Lord be watching....

This close identification with Christ and this use of *my* God and *my* Lord is so loving and empathetic that it becomes totally winsome. Would that we more often speak that way of God and Jesus. Of course, this personal aria in Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* is offset by the big-picture language in a chorale that follows:

O Father, let Thy will be done,
For all things well Thou doest,
In time of need refusest none,
But helpest e'en the lowest.

Too bad I can't reproduce the broad and stately music of this chorale here or the blues style of gospel music employed by Mahalia Jackson to move you more than my words are able to. We'll have to wait for the time when technology makes musical pages in CC possible.

But here, too, we can't hurry our God's time; no, no, no, we just gotta wait. **BW**

Letters

We need to understand other cultures

I would like to offer a more positive perspective on Haiti than Jeff Hoogendoorn provides ("A Haitian odyssey: Birth of an adoptive family," March 6). Our family has lived and worked in Haiti for nine years, and has also adopted two children in Haiti.

Our experience is that Haiti can also be a beautiful and uplifting place. My concern is that the article, by presenting a superficial picture of Haiti, promotes stereotypes and simplistic understandings that only perpetuate "us-them" mentalities. We should not let Haiti's poverty preclude other ways of seeing its people.

If our children (all our children) are to experience a world with less prejudice, we need to try to build understanding and appreciation across cultures, rather than reinforce them.

Had the Hoogendoorns arrived during the rainy season they would have seen green hills covered with small fields of corn or sorghum, still eroded and deforested, but some with contour erosion barriers where farmers are doing their best to manage and steward their situation. Had they the chance to get to know a market lady instead of seeing her as hopeless they would have been able to appreciate her determination and resourcefulness in providing for her family with the meager means she had.

Had they gone to a Haitian church service they would have experienced a hope and trust and faith in God that we comfortable Canadian Christians would do well to learn.

This is not to downplay the severe problem in Haiti, nor to romanticize the virtues of the poverty. Yet if a Haitian came to Canada and focused on the clear-cut scars in B.C. forests, the horror of the acts of Clifford Olsen or Paul Bernardo, the irony of anorexic girls starving themselves to conform to cultural norms, or the drug alleys of Toronto and Vancouver, we would object.

For the sake of the child

How I view Haiti (and Canada) is important because it impacts how I view our adoption of a child from Haiti. If Haiti is only perceived in negative terms we will indeed have rescued a child. (Or perhaps it is the other way around — if we need to think we are rescuing a child, of course we will perceive only the negative aspects of the place the child comes from.) Then we can erase the child's past and not encourage an appreciation of that child's roots when the difficult struggles about identity come in later years.

Instead, as adoptive parents, we need to take the more difficult road of acknowledging the bittersweet nature of adoption. Our joy is possible because of another's sorrow and pain. We need to make the place and people from where our daughters come into real places and people, with strong and beautiful qualities as well as weak and painful ones. We need to try to understand the complexities and history that brought them into the world and into our lives.

As adoptive parents, extended families and church communities, we now have a personal connection with Haiti. We have an opportunity (and an obligation?) to stand with Haitians to find real solutions to their problems. We now have the challenge of living as multicultural families in a society that still often misunderstands and prejudges difference. We have the responsibility of not erasing the diversity and difference that is now part of our communities, but of celebrating and affirming it.

Much gratitude

We should be thankful and supportive of the fact that the Christian Reformed Church, is actively working in Haiti to respond to the complex and interlinked spiritual and material needs there. World Missions and World Relief have seven missionary families in Haiti, and are working increasingly together with local churches and Christian organizations in Bible training, Christian school development, literacy, income generation.

We need to work in our families and churches to encourage and promote this work, this place to which we are now linked through our children. We can be thankful and supportive that our government uses part of our taxes to support development and change in Haiti through matching grants from CIDA to CRWRC, and also provides other bilateral development assistance.

I wish the Hoogendoorns continued joy and happiness as they love their much-longed-for child. I encourage us all to understand people and cultures that are different than ours with openness and appreciation, not simply as "other" and different. For we are all God's (adopted) children, and he gives all his children blessing that they can share with others.

Ray Vander Zaag
Kanata, Ont.

God's laws must be interpreted

I would like to thank Syrt Wolters for his thoughtful response to my recent column on capital punishment. In writing such a column as "Principalities & Powers," it sometimes feels as if I am addressing a silent audience while blindfolded. I am assured there are people present, so I speak to them confident that this is true. Yet I do not really feel their presence. Thus I am happy to know that at least Mr. Wolters counts my ruminations worthy not only to be read but also to be challenged.

Let me assure Mr. Wolters that in opposing capital punishment I have no intention of second-guessing God and his governance of the world. As I indicated in my column, I do not believe capital punishment is intrinsically unjust. Nor would I presume to deny God's sovereign right to judge when he deems it necessary to do so.

At the same time, while God is sovereign over our legal and political systems — something I have spent my academic career thus far trying to emphasize — it needs to be understood that, as fallible image-bearers of God, we human beings are responsible to flesh out the implications of this sovereignty in our positive laws, including the sorts of punishments meted out under these laws. We cannot simply extract commands from Scripture, taken out of their historical and cultural contexts, and apply them immediately to contemporary political and legal dilemmas, as, for example, theonomists tend to do.

Room for disagreement

Thus I believe there is ample room for legitimate disagreement amongst believing Christians as to proper penalties that ought to be administered for specific crimes. My own view is that, first, given the flaws in our justice system, we would be unwise to hand down an irreversible punishment to someone who may be unjustly accused and convicted. This itself would be an affront to God's image and thus to God himself. Mr. Wolters does not address this point.

Second, to repeat what I said in my column, "I am uneasy assuming that mere human beings have the right to cut short God's redemptive purposes, however unlikely they may seem in particular cases." This is hardly to second-guess God. If anything, it recognizes that he often works out his purposes in unexpected ways with which we should be reluctant to tamper.

Therefore, I believe a maximum penalty of life imprisonment is most appropriate in our present contexts here in North America.

David T. Koyzis
Ancaster, Ont.

Don't diminish church's role

Recently J.A. Boessenkool requested a seconder for his move to disband the Canadian CRC's Committee for Contact with the Government. No, I won't be a seconder. The committee raises issues which deserve close attention, in and outside the CRC.

Boessenkool may be annoyed by some of the committee's statements, but he cannot avoid thinking about the issues. Not speaking to the government is falling into the trap into which so many evangelicals have fallen — a separation of the spiritual aspect of the church's life and the socio-political aspects.

The consequence of Boessenkool's suggestion is a diminution of the church's prophetic role.

Bert den Boggende
Lacombe, Alta.

Christian Courier

Member of Canadian Church Press and Evangelical Press Association.
Canada mail: Publications Mail Registration No. 0451. Postage paid at St. Catharines, Ont. Postmaster: send address changes to Christian Courier, 4-261 Martindale Rd., St. Catharines, Ont. L2W 1A1.
U.S. mail: Christian Courier (USPS 518-090). Second-class postage paid at Lewiston, NY. Postmaster: send address changes to Christian Courier, Box 110, Lewiston, NY 14092.

Subscriptions: (effective Feb. 1, 1995)	**Canada** (GST incl.)	**U.S.A.** (GST free)
one year (44 issues)	$43.50	$35.00 U.S.
two years (88 issues)	$82.00	$66.00 U.S.
three years (132 issues)	$123.00	$99.00 U.S.
overseas one year	$135 airmail	$85.00 surface mail

Advertising deadlines: display advertising: Wednesday, 8:30 a.m.; classified advertising: Thursday, 8:30 a.m. All deadlines are for the following week's issue. See classified pages for more details. Advertising rate sheets available.
(ISSN 1192-3415) Published weekly on Fridays except for Feb. 27, April 10, May 29, July 10, Aug. 14, Oct. 2, Nov. 27, and Dec. 25.
Address all correspondence to: 4-261 Martindale Rd., St. Catharines, Ont. L2W 1A1, Tel.: 905-682-8311 or fax: 905-682-8313, e-mail: subscriptions: ccsubscrip@aol.com, advertising: ccadverts@aol.com
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Religious schism in computerland

Umberto Eco

The fact is that the world is divided between users of the Macintosh computer and users of MS-DOS compatible computers. I am firmly of the opinion that the Macintosh is Catholic and that DOS is Protestant.

Indeed, the Macintosh is counter-reformist and has been influenced by the *ratio studiorum* of the Jesuits. It is cheerful, friendly, conciliatory; and it tells the faithful how they must proceed step by step to reach, if not the Kingdom of Heaven, the moment in which their document is printed.

It is catechistic: the essence of revelation is dealt with via simple formulae and sumptuous icons. Everyone has a right to salvation.

The loneliness of DOS

DOS is Protestant, or even Calvinistic. It allows free interpretation of Scripture, demands difficult personal decisions, imposes a subtle hermeneutics upon the user, and takes for granted the idea that not all can reach salvation.

To make the system work you need to interpret the program yourself: a long way from the baroque community of revelers, the user is closed within the loneliness of his own inner torment.

You may object that, with the passage to Windows, the DOS universe has come to resemble more closely the counter-reformist tolerance of the Macintosh. It's true: Windows represents an Anglican-style schism, big ceremonies in the cathedral, but there is always the possibility of a return to DOS to change things in accordance with bizarre decisions.

But what about machine code, which lies beneath both systems (or environments, if you prefer)? Ah, that has to do with the Old Testament, and is Talmudic and cabalistic.

This excerpt is from an English translation of Umberto Eco's back-page column, "La bustina di Minerva," which appeared in the Italian news weekly Espresso *(September 30, 1994).*

Things to fear

Bert Witvoet

Someone provided me with a copy of a speech given some time last year by a reputable reporter of one of Canada's major papers. In this speech, the reporter said some very negative things about corruption in a certain city. I passed the speech on to a friend of mine who lives in the city mentioned in the speech. My friend replied with the following note:

"Thanks for the article. I don't know if I should put our house up for sale and move out. It is very disturbing to read something like this. Food for thought. Our fight is not against powers and principalities but against police and municipalities."

Headship at home

CC Staff

A Christian Reformed Church in southern Ontario is preparing to discuss the issue of women in ecclesiastical office. A member of the preparation committee told his fellow committee members that his wife makes all the minor decisions and he makes all the major ones.

His wife decides what house to buy, where they will live, what kind of car they will own. He decides major things such as what has to happen in Bosnia and Ireland.

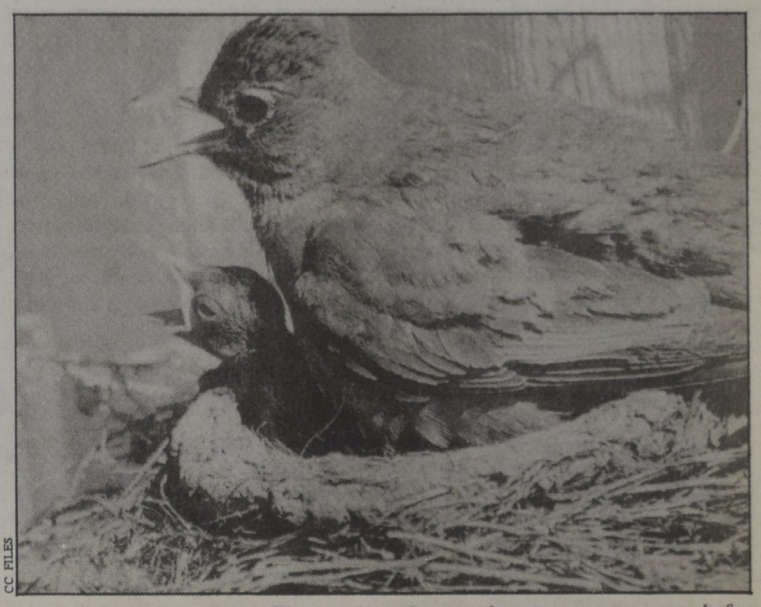
Thinkbit

"There are two kinds of people, those who finish what they start and so on"

Robert Byrne

Imajenings

Red-breasted reasoning



CC FILES

Our back yard is a flurry of winged activity. A few evergreens there offer shade and shelter to tiny finches, wrens and sparrows that flit like ideas at the bird feeders. In the adjacent field a killdeer, camouflaged in the weeds and tangles on the ground, is guarding its nest. A woodpecker lives nearby. He struts and dances at the suet feeder on the birch tree out by the road. The timid cardinals look quickly left to right before they hop away into flight.

Janelle discovered a view from her bedroom window when the buds burst with spring: high in the elbow of the birch tree a nest with four light-blue eggs right where she could see. The robin posted nearby, cocking its head from side to side, and the robin on the ground pulling at a worm — those are the mom and dad, she announced. Janelle set up a lookout post at her window, anxiously waiting, watching to see when the baby birds would hatch.

We also have grackles in our backyard paradise — bold, bluish-black scavengers, nest robbers, shrill shrieking villains of the bird world.

Robins redux

The robins made the mistake of making their nest, with its grand view of Janelle's window, a bit too obvious. So one afternoon the grackles squawked and sniggered over a blue-shelled snack.

The robins, with a couple of pert hops and a few curious tips of their brown heads, declared the mourning period over and flew off to the evergreen to scout a new nest location.

Janelle watched. She had to sit at the bathroom window now, on the other side of the house, in order to see the collection of straw, twigs and string disappear into the tangles of the evergreen. Later, when we carefully peeled the branches apart, we saw the new nest and four new eggs tucked into the shadowy secrecy of this place.

While we were peeking we moved over to the bush that last year had housed five little finch nests in different corners. One of those nests had travelled to school in a paper sack for show-and-tell last fall. All summer we had watched those five families flit through phases from nest building to hatching, fledging and flight. But this year the "family" bush was empty, except for the remnants of last year's nests. The grackles? we wondered.

The new robins' nest seemed to be doing fine. We watched with interest for three weeks. Then, when the weather was warm enough for the grass to feel the first bare feet of the season, Janelle came upon a broken blue half-shell under the evergreen. Behind the evergreen a second broken egg lay spilled out on the ground.

The secluded robins' nest was empty, with no sign of either invasion or natural leave-taking.

"Maybe the other two hatched and got away?" Janelle pleaded earnestly, and I couldn't find the words to tell her that maybe that's not what happened.

Canticle despite chaos

Today there are still robins in our yard. We see them every day. We have never found their newest nest, but somewhere there must be hungry youngsters for all the worms they are finding, Janelle tells me. The backyard feeder plays host to all kinds of bird families; the other day we even saw a hummingbird. And out at the tree line, hawks hover.

All are doing what it is they were called to this earth to do. And doing it singingly.

The grackles are still in our yard, too. And so the nests are well hidden from hungry scavengers and peering people.

It makes me think of our God who so beautifully and carefully designed every little bird so that it exactly fits its own spot in creation — not being lured into fearful hopelessness by its enemies; nor steered from its robin duties by the influence or envy of the other birds around it.

What amazes me most is that, even with spilled nest and ravaged eggs, the robin raises itself up on its thin legs, pulls out the splendor of its uniform and sings praises that haunt the heavens.

Can I, with my grackles, so sing?

Jen VanderBeek is a freelance writer and mother of five. With her pastor husband, Peter, she lives in Forest, Ont.

Books

Faith and literature: how do — or should — they meet?

Harry Der Nederlanden

God and the American Writer
By Alfred Kazin.

New York: Alfred A. Knof, 1997. 272 pp., $35 (US).

Anyone interested in literature, especially American literature, will enjoy this book. Kazin writes in a very readable style, not as a detached specialist but as someone who has lived with the authors he discusses.

Kazin recently received a lifetime literary achievement award and his first book, also on American literature (*On Native Grounds*), was published 55 years ago and is still in print. He has written many times before about most of the figures covered in this book — Hawthorne, Emerson, Melville, Whitman, Dickinson, James, Twain, Eliot, Frost and Faulkner — so his judgments are a product of long and deep acquaintance. In this volume he focuses on the struggle with God revealed in the work of each writer.

There was a time when the faith struggles of literary writers were treated as part of the baggage of beliefs that an author happens to bring to his or her work as a child of a particular era, and marginal to the literary enterprise as such. A shift in recent years makes it respectable to speak of religion once again in the public arena. Kazin's book may be seen as part of that shift, so it should be welcomed by evangelicals.

Antidote to evangelicalism

On the other hand, this book is also a critique of the prominence of religious and moral themes in the public square. Kazin is an old-line liberal in his sympathies. He sees currently in the U.S. "a politicized, intolerant, and paranoic religion" that in its public aggressiveness seeks to coerce the rest of us. The religious attitudes that Kazin surveys are offered, at least in part, as an antidote to the popular evangelicalism of today. He seldom displays much sympathy for popular, "organized" religion but does empathize deeply with the solitary, Job-like struggles of some of his literary heroes.

In an interview a couple of years ago, Kazin talked about his disillusionment with the secular optimism of his youth and about how his outlook, especially on human nature and "the mystery of iniquity," was shaped by many of the writers discussed in this book.

For Kazin, literary criticism is not disinterested; it is a struggle to know one's culture and society, oneself and God. This book is, thus, very much an example of engaged criticism, amateur in the best sense of the word, personal, yet not subjectivistic, focused very much on the big questions. It is an excellent model.

Profound tension

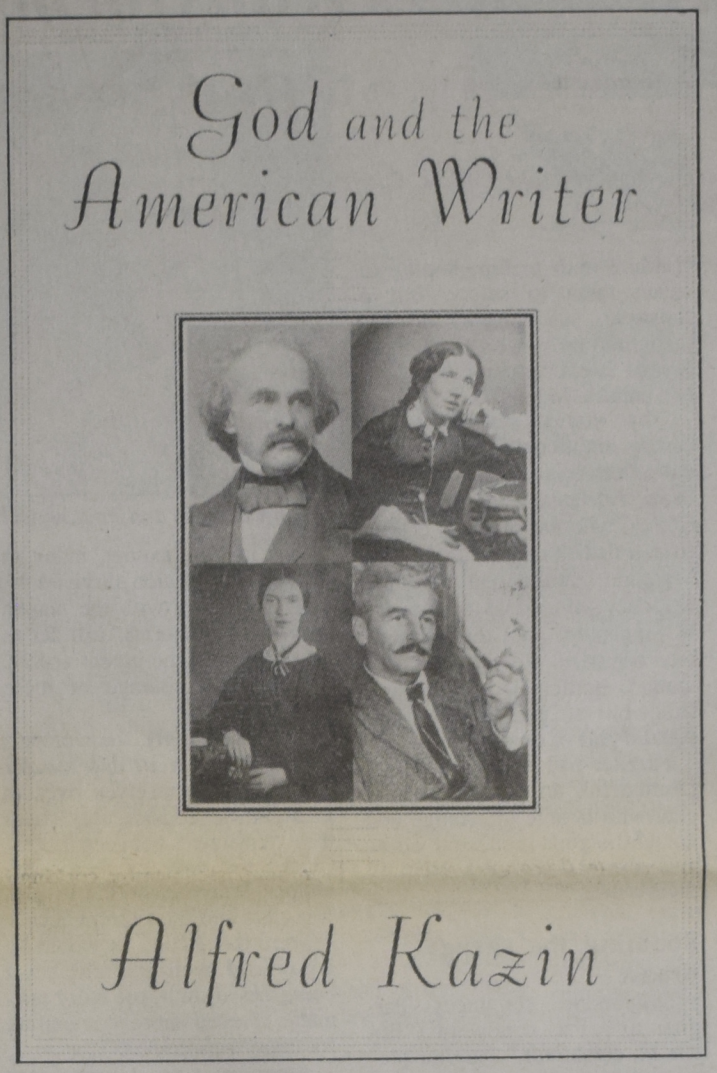
Kazin's criticism exemplifies a profound tension that Reformed thinkers often resolve too glibly: on the one hand, the desire for a commitment that is total, a system of beliefs that permeates every aspect of one's life, and, on the other hand, the aversion to a vulgar, politicized belief that claims to have the answers to everything.

One of the longest chapters is devoted to Harriet Beecher Stowe's immensely popular and influential *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Kazin plainly admires its bold condemnation of slavery, and he sees that its authority derives from Beecher's confidence that she is declaring God's will. (Many Southerners, of course, also claimed to know God's will on the question of slavery.)

He longs for the sense of absolute right and wrong that comes with such a faith, but he fears a popular religion built on credulity and dogmatism, with its seeming loss of honesty and authenticity.

This is a tension that recurs everywhere in Protestant and American thinking, a tension often defined in our churches as one between a dead orthodoxy and a personal, living faith. Whenever the latter receives formal, organized and institutional expression (when it obeys the cultural mandate) it threatens to become a straitjacket for the next generation.

In his 1996 preface to the reprint of *An American Procession* (first published 1984), Kazin projected the title of the present volume as *The Almighty Has His Own Purposes* (a quote from Lincoln). This suggests that over against the tendency of evangelicals to co-opt God's will for their own political and cultural projects, Kazin wanted to assert a God who has purposes beyond ours. Every Calvinist will appreciate such an emphasis.



The attempt to keep God's will unadulterated by human projections, however, often takes the course of making that will so mysterious and inscrutable that it cannot be revealed, except perhaps to a few spiritual wrestlers. Translating religion into commonly accessible forms, formulas and structures, it seems, inevitably debases and distorts it. It loses its authenticity and vitality. It becomes part of our social conventions, part of dead tradition.

Familiar pattern

Behind Kazin's personal perspective we can see a familiar pattern which permeates American history. Conventional religion plays the role that Europe with its classes, hierarchies and petrified traditions played in the imagination of America's first settlers. The old, stifling traditions of Europe were repeatedly contrasted to the new, liberating order that would prevail in the new land.

In its own literature as well as in the imagination of peoples around the globe, America has always been as much a projection of dreams and hopes as a political reality. Perhaps this's why it is often also criticized so severely: such dreams can only be disappointed by the reality.

All such dreams of a new and better order are inevitably compounded with religious hopes. Believers and unbelievers alike are driven by yearnings for the Kingdom of God. Our immigrant parents were also enticed by dreams of greater opportunities in a new land. These were seldom purely spiritual. Quite the contrary, most were as deeply material as the visions of Isaiah. The pattern and the tension that Kazin replicates in his study is, thus, not alien to us.

Our dreams and hopes are fueled by the promises and visions of Scripture but they are invariably compounded with all sorts of personal and cultural stuff. Embodying one's faith, whether on a personal or social level, becomes a constant struggle to sort out the inauthentic from the biblically authentic, the dead and stifling from the vital and liberating.

This is where our encounter with literature and art plays an important role in our lives. They enable and encourage us to come to terms with our dreams and desires. American literature, especially, is exciting in this respect, and Kazin offers us a good stimulus to our reflection, not just on literature, but on the nature of our dreams and our cultural projects before the face of God and in response to the inauguration of his Kingdom.

Harry Der Nederlanden has done doctoral work in literature and literary criticism. He is a member of CC's editorial advisory committee and lives in St. Catharines, Ont.

Look for a report next week on the Festival of Faith and Writing Conference 1998 which was held at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Mich., April 2-4.

Maranatha Homes
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This award-winning Senior Citizen Home is located close to Burlington Christian Reformed Church and Ebenezer Canadian Reformed Church, with audio hook-up for the Sunday services in every apartment from both churches and a weekly evening video church service presentation. Local bus service at the door. Monthly rent is geared to income.

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Video Review

Reluctant travellers transform their road

Marian Van Til

Paradise Road

Stars Glenn Close, Frances McDormand, Pauline Collins, Cate Blanchett. Directed by Bruce Beresford.

This affecting video did not have staying power as a first-run theatre film. That's unfortunate, but it's easy to see why. The struggles of a group of *women* in a World War II, Japanese-controlled concentration camp in Indonesia is not the stuff of ordinary Friday night entertainment. Yet, while at several points it may very well bring you to tears, *Paradise Road* is a triumphant story that does not wallow in woe.

The path these formerly privileged women trod did, indeed, become for many of them a kind of "Paradise Road" — literally, in the case of some who walked that road to death; figuratively, and quite ironically, for each one whose character was built and saved by the agonizing experiences on that sweat- and tear-filled road and who lived to become a different and better woman.

The story begins in early 1942 in Singapore, where comfortable middle-class life for the resident British, Dutch, a few Americans and a German doctor is going on as always, the war being only a distant nuisance.

Then the Japanese break through the British defenses. The British pack women and children onto a ship, hoping to steam them to safety. But a Japanese air attack thwarts them, and those who survive are herded into a camp on the island of Sumatra, Indonesia.

The women survive in the camp, emotionally and spiritually, through music. Two of them, Adrienne Pargiter (Glenn Close), who has a music degree from a British conservatory, and Margaret Drummond (Pauline Collins), who was a missionary in Singapore, pool their expertise, organize all others who want to participate, and bring a little bit of paradise to their squalid part of earth.

Pargiter had been a violinist; Drummond, an all-round musician who is able to arrange and notate the great orchestral works that she and Pargiter have in their heads.

Soothing the savage breast

Drummond convinces Pargiter to act as conductor ("But I'm no conductor," Pargiter protests, to which Drummond quips, "Well, Sir Thomas Beecham isn't available"). So they form a kind of choral orchestra of fellow inmates. It occupies them, soothes them and undoubtedly saves many of them for some two years.

They learn and perform 30 pieces in this manner, many of the scores of which survived the war and, along with the human survivors' memories, still act as a testament to the inventiveness, tenacity and courage of these women.

Glenn Close (l.) and Pauline Collins as POWs.

Not surprisingly, the women's pulling together in this manner and giving themselves over to great music considerably eases the tensions between them caused not only by their long, tedious confinement, but by pre-war class and racial prejudices.

Were this fiction, it would be a powerful, well-told tale; but it being based on a true story may make it even more compelling for many viewers.

American actor Glenn Close puts in a low-key, well-modulated performance as Pargiter, British accent firmly and effectively in place. British theatre actor Pauline Collins gives the practical Margaret Drummond a quiet but thoroughly believable luminosity which seems to make her faith and compassion shine softly from her very being.

There are many touching (and sometimes funny)exchanges between the various characters, but especially between Pargiter and Drummond: as they're concocting their choral orchestra plan, Adrienne Pargiter suddenly realizes she doesn't know Drummond's Christian (first) name — Pargiter was upper class; Drummond a mere missionary.

"It's Daisy," says Drummond, "but I never liked it, and always wanted to be called Margaret." Without hesitation, Pargiter graciously responds, "Then Margaret it is"; she calls Drummond that from then on.

While Pargiter and Drummond are the most developed characters, the small core who surround them are diverse, and interesting in their own right.

Julianna Margulies of television's *ER* fame plays, not as well as she might have, an American woman who gets caught in Singapore with the rest of them.

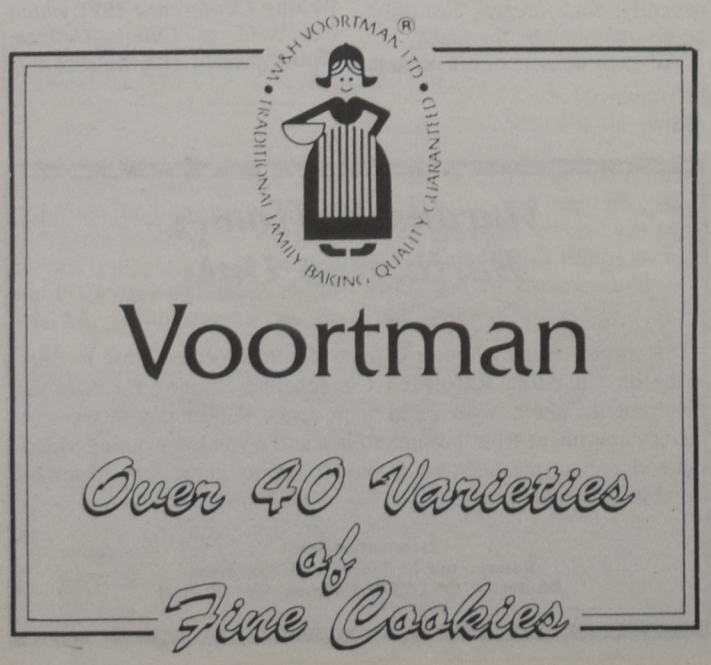
American Frances McDormand, who sprang on the seen as the pregnant police chief in *Fargo,* adeptly plays a German doctor whom the other women are reluctantly forced to trust. A handful of tertiary characters rounds out the female cast.

A few false notes are sounded by the way the Japanese officers who run the camp are presented. They begin as one-dimensional cardboard figures who bark orders in a constant vocal scream, much like many film-Nazis have done before them. It could be argued, I suppose, that that's how the women see them, and even the officers, sadistic as they are, become a little more human as time goes on.

It turns out that the ruthless officer who directly oversees the women's daily life is also a music lover. Somehow, an improbable scene in which he shoves Pargiter into the woods at gunpoint, then sits her down and *sings* a Japanese song to her, shouldn't work. But it does.

This is an excellent film to watch and talk over in a family (but not with very young children), with friends, in a school class or church group. If there's an overt moral to the story for our time it might be that one should never underestimate the power of memory to console.

Memorizing has gone out of fashion as a pedagogical tool. But it is vital to one's inner spiritual life, especially in adversity. In such times, from where do we, and from where will our children, draw strength if not from the Psalms, other Scripture, poetry, hymns and other music we carry around with us in our heads?



Hallmark markets suicide card

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (LSN) —Hallmark is marketing a sympathy card for the loved ones of those who have committed suicide. Many have expressed concern that the card puts suicide in a positive light. Company spokesperson Rachel Bolton revealed that the message inside the card describes someone fleeing from life and the impossibility of knowing that person's suffering. It also seeks to reassure the reader that "our compassionate Creator" understands and "already has welcomed" the loved one home.

Critics note that no other type of sympathy card commemorates an action which is in itself morally wrong. People of various faiths also note that while no one can judge the hearts of those who commit suicide, and while there is always the hope of God's mercy, it is wrong to assume that those who commit suicide necessarily go to heaven.

University offers first software engineering degree

OTTAWA — Canada's first Bachelor's degree in software engineering will soon be offered by the University of Ottawa's School of Information Technology and Engineering.

The faculty will prepare students for a career by offering a strong foundation in computer software and hardware, along with math and science in the first two years, reports Quinte Christian High School's *Grapevine* newsletter. The third and fourth year will focus in depth on software engineering.

Although the program will train engineers to work in a wide range of information technology fields, it is especially designed to meet the needs of the telecommunications sector.

Agriculture

Why does CFFO do things differently from its secular counterparts?

COURTESY CFFO

CFFO members discuss their concerns.

Elbert van Donkersgoed

The approach of the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario (CFFO) is its way of working out its members' faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior as it applies to their profession, and it works well enough to give a group that represents 10 per cent of Ontario's commercial farmers an impact on public policy and farm issues well beyond what its numbers warrant.

Here are some of the reasons why the CFFO works.

The link of faith

First, it is faith based. Most farm groups have only the bond of common economic interest. CFFO members share a faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. This creates a powerful link among members — a link that allows them to listen and to learn from one another. This link has two significant benefits: First, it allows the CFFO to take positions on the tough questions of our time and to promote long-term and leading edge solutions; and it creates consistency. A new group of delegates at the CFFO's policy setting provincial board is not likely to ask that some personal, narrow economic interest become the CFFO policy position.

Second, members "huddle." They step back from the hurly-burly of farm politics and business decisions into member think-tanks. These are facilitated workshops in which they listen to and learn from each other. When a consensus emerges it is often timely enough and solid enough to be "leading edge" on farm policy issues.

Third, they start with reality therapy. They don't have to like the way the world works but they start with understanding it. They have little time for idealism or conspiracy theories. They focus on the changes and improvements that they can make happen.

Fourth, they build leadership. Participation in the CFFO is a vigorous learning activity. Lively discussions with other entrepreneurs, or working out the implications of one's faith, or doing good reality therapy are exceptional leadership experiences.

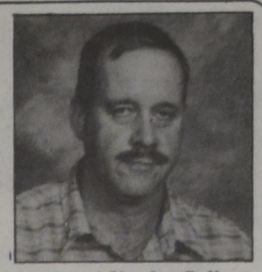
Fifth, they have a good time. At the CFFO annual convention there is celebration, fellowship, education and entertainment. But this is so not just once a year. Respect for one another means members are not burdened with backroom politics and internal controversy. All through the year there is friendship, camaraderie and a colleague type of culture.

The CFFO is an organization with a difference — for good reasons. Being part of it allows Christian family farmers in Ontario to make a difference.

Elbert van Donkersgoed is executive director of the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario and publisher of Earthkeeping Ontario in Guelph, Ont. Van Donkersgoed offers a two-minute commentary called "Corner Post" to radio stations in the province.

Whatever happened to clear speech?

Farm fodder



Maynard Vander Galien

I listened to Ontario's agriculture minister on the Sunday afternoon "Town and Country Ontario" TV program and wondered why he, like so many people from all walks of life, uses the word "basically" so many times when he talks. Why is this word so popular?

Why can't Canadians learn to speak properly? Listen closely to people on radio and television and you'll see what I'm getting at. Listen to popular sports figures and people in the entertainment industry. Why do they use so many filler words and keep repeating them?

I wince every time I hear someone use (misuse) the word "basically." It's used far too often. The other day I heard someone use that word twice in one sentence.

I mean, get it right!

Listen to chatty Valerie Pringle on "Canada AM" and see how many filler words she uses when she talks. She will say, "You know, I mean, well, I don't care for that...." Listen to Paul McCartney when he is interviewed and count the "you know" and "I mean" filler words.

I thought the word "ton" referred to 2,000 pounds of something. I thought ton was a weight. Not anymore. Some examples from a radio station I listen to: "I did a ton of things on the weekend." "We had a ton of fun." "We got a ton of letters in." "We are giving away a ton of money in our contest." "I play a ton of sports."

Another word that is used far too often — and incorrectly — is "hopefully." "Hopefully, the weather will be nice this weekend." "Hopefully, it will be a heifer calf." "Hopefully, we'll get to go to the finals." ("Hopefully" doesn't mean the same as "I hope.")

I always carry a notepad and a pen when I go out and they came in handy at a restaurant the other day. Sitting in front of me were six teenaged girls. I couldn't help eavesdrop on them. "Like, every time Jason, like, he goes like...." I winced.

I watched an Ottawa high school class on a TV newscast about a film they had produced at school. One girl did most of the talking. They should have coached her — every sentence she spoke had "like" in it at least once, often more.

Does anybody care?

Surely someone in our education system could teach high school students proper English and not to use the word "like," especially when producing a film and being featured on TV.

And why do people always have to think out loud? "I think we'll call the meeting to order." "I think we have a question over there." I think this and I think that.

We have adults and municipal politicians who say "youse" instead of "you." "Are youse ready to go?" "Do youse have any questions?"

I was at a workshop and the instructor kept saying "okay." "Okay." "Okay, we'll move on." Okay, Okay, Okay.

I wonder about people who say "At this point in time." What other point is there?

What really gets me is seeing a married couple sitting together being interviewed for television about school, children — whatever and one parent will say, "I want the best for my children." "My son plays...." "My daughter...."

My, my, my. How about "our" children? "Our" son or daughter?

Well, I guess, basically I'll end on that note. You know, I'm having a ton of fun writing these columns.

Maynard Vander Galien is a farmer in the Ottawa Valley, in Renfrew, Ont. This week he starts his 11th year as a newspaper columnist. He told us regarding this column: "I had planned to do a column on the CFFO (Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario) local meeting and workshop. The turnout was very small. No interest. I went to the local Farm Safety Association annual meeting and I was the only farmer, beside the local board, who showed up. So I thought I'd have a little fun with my favorite topic and do a column on words I hate to hear." Like, basically, we second his observations.

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Church

Indonesian Christians debate response to national crisis

FUJIHIRA MONKMEYER

A village market in Indonesia: The country is reeling from an 80 per cent drop in the value of its money.

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (REC) — The Indonesian economy is on a downward slide and has not hit bottom yet. That was the grim news Enggartiasto Lukito told some 200 Indonesian Christian pastors and others gathered to discuss the current crisis in Indonesia.

The country is reeling from an 80 per cent drop in the currency value. Increased unemployment, higher food prices and general shortage of imported commodities has created instability.

Enggartiasto told delegates that Indonesia would soon be unable to produce even basic needs, such as tissue paper because nearly all products except palm oil depend on imports, and Indonesia has no credit.

Life in Jakarta seems only mildly disturbed. Prices have risen in some areas, but fuel is still cheap and available. Occasional demonstrations reroute traffic, but business goes on. One speaker, Eka Dharmaputera, compared the Indonesians to those on the *Titanic*. They refuse to believe that the country has been deeply wounded and is in danger of sinking.

Christians scapegoats

The Christians are a minority in this mainly Muslim population. One of the dangers is that the Christians will become the scapegoats for the problem. Recently several more churches have been burned.

The other target of the Indonesian riots has been the Chinese minority. The Christian Church of Indonesia (GKI), one of the co-sponsors of the meeting, is a multiethnic church, but dominated by the Chinese. The Chinese have been successful in Indonesia in many areas of distribution of goods; they are the nation's shopkeepers. As such they are a frequent target of anger.

Radius Prawiro, a former government minister and GKI member, told the group there was a leadership problem in both the government and the church. He said religious life has become ritualized, without spiritual warmth. Ironically, this spiritual formalism has increased fanaticism, Radius said.

All sectors must repent and reform, Radius argued. The government must submit to the 50 demands for reform that the International Monetary Fund has set as a condition for helping out.

Radius, who has been called out of retirement to renegotiate private international debt, said that Christians must work to see clearly the causes of debt. Some think it is the system of globalization, some point to the free market, and some to corruption.

"We must name the problem," Radius said. "Our friends know what is happening, and no one wants to see us collapse. But they are wary." He told the Christians gathered there not to be afraid to speak with a prophetic voice for the good of all.

The conference came to no conclusion or public statement, but did end with a long prayer session for the different sectors of Church and society.

'Evangelist' and his enthusiasm crash-land

LONDON, England (EP) — A would-be evangelist who planned to spread the gospel from the air has instead crash-landed with a criminal record. John Holme was fined 1,050 pounds (about $2,500 Cdn) plus 250 pounds ($650) in costs for flying too close to a populated area in his paraglider. Holme planned to call people to repentance using a megaphone.

"I thought that maybe if they heard this voice booming out from the sky, they would think it was God," the software salesman told *The London Times*. But it was Holme who almost met his Maker, as he was forced to zigzag to avoid trees and an electric fence.

Residents who witnessed the spectacle said Holme had a look of horror on his face, but Holme said, "As a Christian, I would not have been frightened of dying. Considering it was the first time I had flown, I think my performance was not too bad."

Pewter becomes gold mine for cathedral

FREDERICTON, N.B. — Christ Church Cathedral, in Fredericton, is the oldest Anglican stone cathedral outside of Britain and is known by architects as Canada's finest example of decorated Gothic style. But the cathedral, which was built between 1845 and 1853, has proven extremely expensive to restore, reports the *Globe and Mail*.

The cathedral's fresh copper roof and new cross are just the tip of the steeple in a five-year, $2.5 million restoration campaign. Some of the money for the campaign has come from an unusual source. A group of 15 seniors, including retired Archbishop Harold Nutter, have been making and selling small pewter pieces based largely on the church's ornate designs.

Pewter is an alloy of tin and copper which the seniors have been fashioning into bookmarks, Christmas ornaments, and pendants, these last designed after the stone cross given to the cathedral by England's Canterbury Cathedral. Prices range from $5 to $25 for the pieces.

Since 1994, the Cathedral Pewtersmiths have contributed more than $20,000 to the restoration campaign. The success is sweet to David Wilson, chairperson of the restoration committee, who says, "They're the hidden surprise. They're up there among the bigger donors."

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CRC synod asked to delete anti-Catholic statement from catechism

DETROIT, Mich. (URNS) — Should the Christian Reformed Church delete a statement in its doctrinal standards declaring that the Roman Catholic Mass "is basically nothing but a denial of the one sacrifice and suffering of Jesus Christ and a condemnable idolatry?" Classis Lake Erie thinks so. It has unanimously adopted an overture asking the Christian Reformed synod which will meet in June in Grand Rapids, Mich., to delete that language from the *Heidelberg Catechism.*

CC FILES

An old tradition credits Caspar Olevianus (1536-1587) and Zacharias Ursinus as the authors of the Heidelberg Catechism, *completed by 1563 for Elector Frederick III, ruler of the influential German province of the Palatinate.*

The only discussion on the issue was whether some of the quotations in the document were correctly attributed. While the issue was clear to Classis Lake Erie, getting the CRC synod to change a confession which was written four centuries ago and which has been used by the CRC since it began in 1857 may not be quite as easy.

"I can't imagine that a decision of this magnitude would be made on the basis of one look at it at one synod; that would be very uncharacteristic," says CRC general secretary Dr. David Engelhard."It is possible it could be put into the hands of a committee for further reflection, but it's possible that synod could argue that we studied this 15 or 20 years ago."

Not the first try

Engelhard's mention of prior study refers to requests by Rev. James LaGrand and by Classis Rocky Mountain to Synod 1975 to delete or amend Question and Answer 80 of the *Heidelberg Catechism* in which it asks: "How does the Lord's Supper differ from the Roman Catholic Mass?"

The answer given includes the statement: "The Mass teaches that the living and the dead do not have their sins forgiven through the suffering of Christ unless Christ is still offered for them daily by the priests. It also teaches that Christ is bodily present in the form of bread and wine where Christ is therefore to be worshipped. Thus the Mass is basically nothing but a denial of the one sacrifice and suffering of Jesus Christ and a condemnable idolatry."

Synod '75 rejected LaGrand's request to delete the question entirely but asked a denominational study committee to look at proposed amendments. Synod 1977 then decided not to change the language, on five grounds, including that "a historical creed must not be altered without weighty reasons," and that the "statements of [the Roman Catholic Council of Trent] which Answer 80 rejects have not been repudiated by the Roman Catholic Church."

Needs repudiation?

Synod 1997 also said: "Although the language in Answer 80 appears sharp, such indignation at the withholding of assurance of salvation from believers is not inappropriate to a confessional statement. Trent speaks rather sharply too. And the acts of teaching and refuting are frequently coupled in the New Testament."

A decade later, those arguments are no longer persuasive to Classis Lake Erie. Or to First CRC of Detroit, which brought the overture to classis "due to our increasing association with our brothers and sisters of the Roman Catholic Church."

"Members of the Christian Reformed Church marrying people from other denominations, and in particular the Roman Catholic faith, is increasing as is our association with Roman Catholics generally," said Detroit's overture. "When prospective members coming to the Christian Reformed Church from Catholic background are instructed in the Christian Reformed Church doctrines, they are offended and puzzled by the strong language used in Q&A 80."

While acknowledging that the catechism "might be historically accurate to the 1500s," First Detroit CRC argued that "churches of any denomination rarely, if ever 'repudiate' previous positions. Over time, however they do change them. The Roman Catholic Church as shown in its new confession with the Evangelical Lutheran Church and as stated in the Baltimore Catechism, believes in justification by faith alone."

Agreement on Christ's sacrifice

First Detroit CRC noted a "Joint Declaration on Justification" made by North American Roman Catholics with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), which says, "Justification thus means that Christ himself is our righteousness, in which we share through the Holy Spirit in accord with the will of the Father. Together we confess: By grace alone, in faith in Christ's saving work and not because of any merit on our part, we are accepted by God and receive the Holy Spirit, who renews our hearts while equipping and calling us to good works."

It also quoted the recent Catholic catechism's statement that "on the cross Christ physically shed his blood and was physically slain, while in the Mass there is no physical shedding of blood nor physical death, because Christ can die no more; on the cross Christ gained merit and satisfied for us, while in the Mass he applies to us the merits and satisfaction of his death on the cross."

As a result, First Detroit CRC wants Q&A 80 from the text of the *Heidelberg Catechism* while placing in an appendix information noting when it was included by the authors and when it was removed by the Christian Reformed Church.

Classis Lake Erie argues that "the phrase 'is a condemnable idolatry' should be reserved for describing actions of persons who don't believe in justification by faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior"; that "practice of basic love, unity, and understanding among Christians today demands the removal of Q&A 80 from confessional status in the CRCNA"; and that "Q&A 80 was not included in the original text of the *Heidelberg Catechism* and was added only as a response to statements in the Council of Trent made in December of 1563."

Choosing our enemies

Chapter & Verse

● Wayne Brouwer
Andrew Kuyvenhoven
Laura Smit
Al Wolters

"Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God. Or do you think Scripture says without reason that the spirit he caused to live in us envies intensely?"
(James 4:4-5)

Every good story is told best through the rim of darkness and shadow. I think of the conflict between the composers Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Antonio Salieri in 18th century Vienna. Salieri was the official court musician, and he had a right to be. He worked hard at his craft, writing hummable melodies and decent choral pieces.

Envy

Salieri was a devout Christian and had prayed passionately for God to bless him in his musical efforts. His appointment in the royal precincts seemed to confirm God's gracious response.

Then came Mozart, boy wonder, child prodigy. He would dazzle the crowds, playing at music as if it were as natural as the air he breathed, and as trivial a thing as some simple toy. Mozart's fingers danced at the keyboard, and his melodies for instruments and choirs were both complex and fun at the same time. When he directed the orchestra in his own works it seemed as if heaven came alive on earth.

Salieri grew green with envy. More than that, he was bitter at the unfairness of it all. Mozart was as obvious a sinner as Salieri was a saint! Mozart was immature, vulgar, a ladies' man.

Desire

Salieri was incensed. Why should God shower such talents on Mozart while he, Salieri, worked his devotion to music with incredible drudgery? Why should Mozart traffic in worldly pleasures and still succeed so divinely?

When Mozart died from some mysteriously induced poisoning, Salieri's eyes gleamed vengefully. Yet Mozart's demise never restored to Salieri the esteem he coveted among the Viennese elite. He ended his days in an insane asylum, cursing God for denying him the kind of talent that Mozart had displayed with a sometimes profane playfulness.

Desire and envy are twin sisters within us. Our thirst for God and his goodness rises from the same heart that can jealously seek fame and fortune over the heads of rivals.

If you have ever been hurt in life, if you have ever been passed over for a promotion, if you have ever been struck down by a disease or a disability you didn't count on, if you have ever watched others sail right on through waters that swamped your boat, or sail through winds that plastered your craft against the cliff, you know what Salieri tasted whenever crowds applauded Mozart.

Grace

We choose our enemies more quickly than we choose our friends. Wise is the person who knows enough about the character of God to choose for enemies those powers that set themselves over against grace. If we don't choose our enemies carefully, we may end up failing to be friends of God.

Wayne Brouwer is senior pastor at Harderwyk Christian Reformed Church in Holland, Mich.

GoodMorning, Squid!

by
Sonia Jones

They say there's one on every bus tour. Ours was called Lou, a raucous used-car salesman who demanded the limelight every minute of the way from Athens to Meteora and back again. That would be a total of 5,760 minutes to be exact, if you subtract eight hours a night for sleeping. They were the longest minutes any of us had ever experienced. But we were determined to have an enjoyable trip, so we suffered through Lou's tedious antics with gritted teeth and artificial smiles.

Our tour leader, Eleni, was a friendly, well-informed woman in her middle years who put up with Lou with saintly patience. On the first morning she greeted us with a hearty *kalimera* ("Good morning" in Greek), to which Lou responded *calamari* at the top of his lungs. He was so pleased with his little joke that he kept it up for the rest of the tour, startling unsuspecting Greek citizens by slapping them on the back and wishing them "squid," accompanied by loud, braying laughter.

Eleni got back at him, though. As we passed the road to Nemea she told us the story of how Hercules killed a lion with his bare hands. The animal's blood soaked the earth, and from then on the grapes of the region yielded a strong wine known as "lion's blood."

Third glass no charm

"With the first glass," she declared, "you will become as strong as a lion. With the second one you will become as strong as Hercules. And with the third glass," she concluded, casting a significant glance in Lou's direction, "you will become as foolish as a donkey." Lou laughed louder than anyone else.

When we arrived in Corinth, Eleni gave us an enlightening lecture about life in the ancient city at the end of the first century A.D. She pointed out the temple high on a nearby hill where priestesses from the best families once practiced sexual rites in honor of the goddess Aphrodite (hoots of approval from Lou), and she indicated the ruins of the marketplace where less exalted "ladies" sold their bodies for money (they wore sandals that said "follow me" — a biting irony that was not lost on us).

She also pointed out the nearby area where the wives gathered to exchange gossip and to keep an eye on their men from a discreet distance. I understood as never before the sense of urgency that inspired the Apostle Paul to write such a beautiful letter to the Corinthians about the meaning of Christian love.

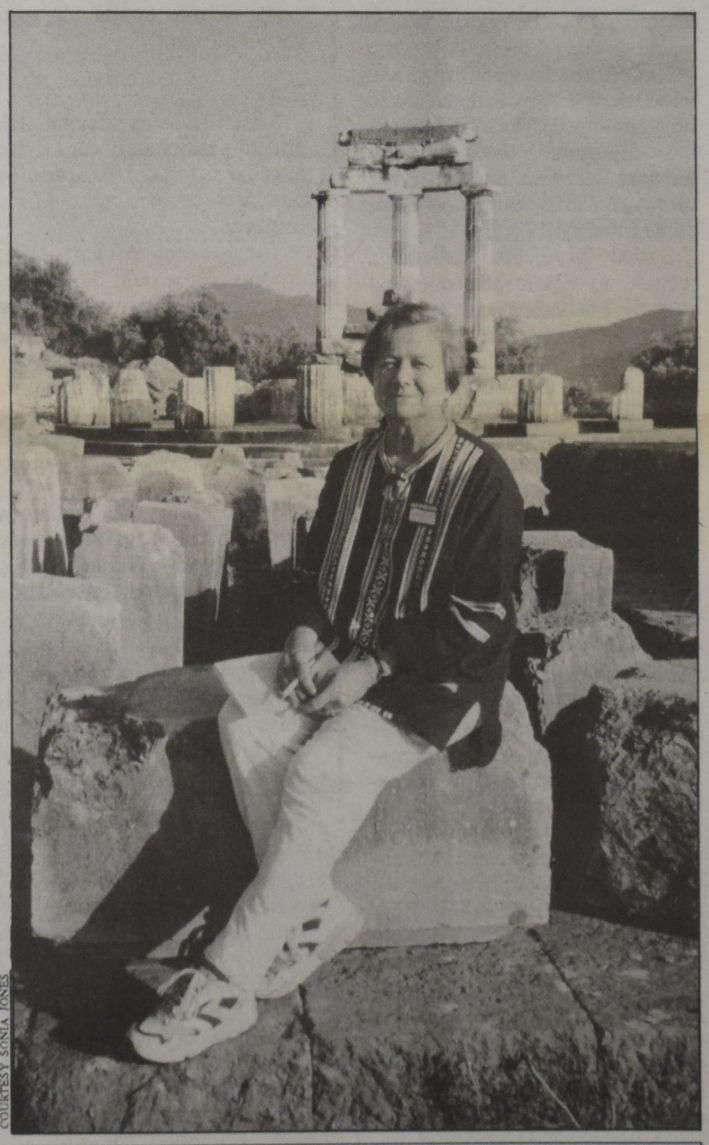
Our next stop was Mycenae, an important site discovered in the 19th century by Heinrich Schliemann, the German archaeologist who had such faith in the literal accuracy of Homer's tales that he found ancient Troy and the ruins of other pre-historic communities in the precise locations described in the classical poet's works.

Although by this time Lou was beginning to experience some spectacular failures in his unwanted efforts to entertain us, Eleni managed to keep us smiling without realizing she was doing so. As she lectured us about the voyages of Ulysses, she happened to mention that the hero's dog was named Argus, after the terrible monster whose whole body was covered with ice.

Ice? How in the world, we asked ourselves, could a country with Greece's temperate climate ever cradle a monster whose body obviously needed to be maintained at sub-zero temperatures? The shoe finally dropped when she reminded us that Argus never slept because he was able to keep a few of his many "ice" open at all times.

Some staff!

From Mycenae we turned east to Epidaurus where we admired the well-preserved 2,300 year-old open-air amphitheatre. Some of us climbed all the way to the top, where we marvelled at the fact that we could hear Eleni light a match from the middle of the arena below.



COURTESY SONIA JONES

Sonia Jones sits on the ruins of Olympia.

The acoustics were so good that we had no trouble at all hearing what she had to say about how Apollo seduced a beautiful woman who then insulted the god by marrying a mere mortal (how many of us have committed that sin?).

Apollo punished the woman by burning her on a funeral pyre, but before she died he snatched his son from her womb, thus performing the first Caesarian section. He named the boy Asklepios, and sent him off to be reared by a group of centaurs.

These creatures, half man and half horse, gave him a snake that would protect him and cure any disease. The boy carried the reptile around on his staff and this symbol was later known by the Romans as the *caduceus* (maybe I should check this out with Moses).

It is hard to describe, in such a short article, the sense of wonder my husband and I felt as our bus took us along the highways of this country so rich in culture and with such ancient roots in history.

We visited Delphi with its imposing mountains and temples, and we learned about the inscrutable oracle who made predictions that could be interpreted in many different ways. We learned that Sparta was protected not by a stone wall but by the strong bodies of its citizens, who washed in cold water and lived on a Spartan diet of bread and black bean soup.

"Never lived in Sparta good artists," Eleni observed soberly. "The Spartans knew how to fight, but not how to live."

The cultural centre in ancient Greece was Athens, named after Athena, the goddess of wisdom, whose emblem was the owl. I had already noticed that owls of every size, shape and description were for sale in shops and tourist traps throughout the city.

When we came to Olympia we alighted from the bus and stood in awe before the stadium where the first Olympic games had been held in 776 B.C. Eleni got some of the younger people organized into a straight line, then they raced one another to a certain goal post and back to the starting line again.

Although Lou was the acknowledged winner of this particular race, I noticed that he had turned and run back to the starting point well before reaching the goal post. This did not seem to interfere in any way with his glowing sense of triumph, and he exhibited zero shame as he accepted the olive wreath with which Eleni crowned his dampened brow.

'Elimination' tour

The only disappointment we experienced on our trip was the visit to Meteora (meaning "suspended from the sky"). I had seen photographs of the small monasteries perched precariously atop high cliffs in the northern mountains, and I was looking forward to taking some pictures of my own. But unfortunately on the day we went to this famous area all the monasteries were shrouded in the thickest fog I had ever seen, rivalled only by London's pea soup variety. To make matters worse, two of the women on the tour had forgotten to wear skirts that day and had therefore been judged "indecorous" by guards at the entryway to the monastery.

They were issued some drab-looking skirts and were politely

continued on page 13...

Vacation Issue 1998

Wind Harp

Tom Doyle

I walked for weeks a section of the Appalachian Trail. Most days I saw no other persons. Being alone fit my frame of mind.

After the first week I met a man who said those who came for distance hikes are looking for salvation, although they don't put that word to it. I thought quest, insight, proving oneself. Why else the ibuprofin and my blue-bruised toenails. But salvation? I didn't come looking for salvation. I came for solutions. My focus would be on the life within. The Greeks thought that way, now the psychoanalysts. Introspection is where our culture likes the hunt.

I planned to measure my mental healing by how my dreams went. I logged them. The first was an ugly witch-face and conversations of money, power, fear, failure. More dreams like that followed. This was my world at the starting blocks.

One late day in a trail shelter where I'd planned to rest, I found a Bible. I paid it a casual look. There was much to do and little time before dark. Cook, wash, replenish water, make notes, arrange an orderly collapse: all this would fill the remaining hour of light. But the little time remaining was time enough to open the cover of the Bible.

The dedication:
Presented to Hikers of the A.T.
Presented by Daniel's father.
May this help you and may the Trail
provide memories to last you a lifetime.

A date last year was given, and then —

For Daniel's spirit.

I stuffed the Bible back into the mouse-proof plastic and placed the book on the shelf. My thought was water from the spring. Go there, by the pool. Return before nightfall. This I did.

Settled in the shelter, I saw the moon full-round. It glowed with power I had not measured until the darkness came. Through the trees I saw nearby a slight meadow, rare in this forest. I left the gloom of the shelter. I'd lie upon the illumined grass and sleep under the heavens.

I didn't sleep at all. I became a wind harp opened to the night air. The ocean surrounding was in motion, the view too vast to allow my eyes to close. The pulse would not slow because of the strings of my heart. The wind harp was catching the swells from the expanse.

He couldn't help it

A great owl already knew what I was learning to sense. Its call strong and echoing long through the wilderness corridors told me so. My eye focused on a gnarl of a dead tree, bare and silver, no longer feeling light. Its wind harp had played, too. I wasn't along back then to hear with it, but I knew it sang before because I was hearing the oaks around my bed, their soft shushing upon the strings of my own harp.

As I lay I heard as David heard before he wrote his Psalms. He was not a man my age when he discovered the harp within. It was not when he was king. He was the shepherd boy. It was when young eyes can find pinpoints of light upon the endless canopy. It was then the knowing settled into his heart forever. After that he wrote his Psalms. He couldn't help it.

How did the harp play? "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows his handiwork" (Psalm 19:1). Through trifocles I saw the stars move through the piece of ocean above. I measured their course against the silhouette of the tree gnarl, a marker I used against the sky. Like my own heart's beating, the harp's playing was not of my doing. It was being played, and being played fervently as I found three giant crosses among the stars, to me a declaration of God's most glorious work.

From this night and into the following days I rejoiced as I continued to hear the harp's playing. Also, there was no more introspection nor troubled dreams. Why go back to a mud puddle when one can move into ocean?

'How excellent thy name'

Some of what I found as I moved through the forest cathedral: a bear hunting berries and we going our separate ways with plenty of space for both of us; the wood's brook and its life-sustaining waters, bringing to me all of that with its gentle singing, too; flashes of red and yellow and green sent by the sun through a single drop of dew nudged in a gentle breeze; the lovely toad, rounded, moist, earthy, its black eyes radiant diamonds raised to the giant hovering over it; the timber rattler coiled and letting me know, its tail humming, *Go round and wel'll be on our way, you and I.* Even then the harp was playing — "Oh Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth" (Psalm 8:9).

In a car, a kind man was shuttling me to the city of my departure. I told him of the rattler. He looked at me. "Why didn't you kill it?" I thought of the boy's father. "For Daniel's spirit," he had written. Sharing that Bible was evidence of a father's broken heart mended. The wind harp's playing had done its work in all of us. The rattler singing with its tail was a part of the same wind song. So how could I kill it?

Distance hikers looking for salvation? Yes, why not say that. It's when the strings of the heart are unison-tuned and open to the wind that's like salvation; divine accomplishment comes from beyond anything we can do.

The mountain top is far away now. Traffic rage is not. I'm back in the city. Is the harp still playing? Yes. It's still there, settled deep, too deep to ever leave. And no witch faces remain. They stay gone now. It's because I know wherever I am my harp is playing, open to the Wind.

Thomas Doyle is a freelance writer who lives in Brandon, Florida.

Good Morning, Squid!

Priests celebrating Mass on the bema where Paul preached to the Corinthians

The Temple of Apollo at Delphi

...continued from page 12

asked to slip them on over their slacks. The final effect was far less decorous than the stylish look they had sported on their arrival. It brought to mind the rigorous, incomprehensible rules that governed our uniforms when I was a schoolgirl in London. Lou immediately reverted to schoolboy humor himself, teasing the women mercilessly until one of them threatened to make him permanently disappear by tossing him over the edge of the cliff.

As we approached Athens again, tired but inspired by the glory that was Greece, Eleni reminded us to assemble in front of the hotel after dinner for the illumination tour. Suddenly Lou turned pale.

"What elimination tour?" he croaked, gripping the seat in front of him and glancing nervously at the two women he had pestered in Meteora.

Calamari, Lou, wherever you are. And squids to you, too, gentle reader.

Sonia Jones is a retired professor who is a member of All Nations Christian Reformed Church, Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Vacation Issue 1998

Creation speaks

John Krueger

While strolling through the Mapleview shopping centre I heard a loon call wafting through the speakers of a nature tape outlet. Next came Pachelbel's Canon mingled with ocean waves. The imitations of the wild are peddled along with everything else. On my way home I drove past a billboard for a new subdivision. It proudly displayed a great blue heron wading through a sprawling marsh — developers appeal to nature to sell homes even if woods and wetlands are destroyed in the process.

"But it was there I learned that the Word through creation not only instructs as a sermon; it also heals like a song."

Soon the disparity became too much for me. I had to break free from the streets strewn with neon to find the natural signs pointing to God's grace. I laced up my hiking boots and headed for a trail.

Nature is no holier than a city street. The Lord is everywhere. The power of wilderness comes from its ability to bind us to our beliefs, to open us to the God who is always present. The Lord may be the same everywhere, but we are not. In the blare of our consumer culture we need places which speak a different language than our shopping malls, places where we can hear creation speak.

A hike does it for me. There is no frantic bargain-hunting on the trail. I come away empty handed (except for the odd pine cone and leaf sample) but with a renewed sense of ownership. The forests and brooks might just as well have been written into a deed with my name on it. God has given us all things in Christ to freely enjoy. Sometimes more happens. Gazing at the horizon, I sense a benediction over the land. It's as if I've been given this moment, this whirling broad-winged hawk or this gentle snow fall. Then I know that wilderness provides a place for more than recreation. It becomes a conduit through which God may touch me.

COURTESY JOHN KRUEGER

An unfamiliar language

"The earth proclaims God's handiwork and the heavens pour forth speech," but it's a different language than we're used to. Last summer I watched the northern lights tremble over a lake. Nothing was spoken. Volumes were spoken. We could say God "speaks" through the creation in a non-verbal, affective way.

While watching the *aurora* I experienced meaning through a sense of awe, humility and well-being. Of course many would attest to similar experience given through Gaia or Mother Earth.

That's why Christians begin with biblical revelation rather than going to nature for theology. C.S. Lewis, who was an inveterate walker and nature lover, used to say: "Nature never taught me that there existed a God of glory and of infinite majesty. I had to learn that in other ways. But nature gave the word 'glory' a meaning for me." Creation is a *living illustration* of theology. The flaming crimson of the setting sun may speak to us of God's majesty more than words ever could.

A simple hike can make us receptive to this language of creation. Consider how God took people on hikes in Scripture. He led them into the desert, up on to mountains and beside rivers. God changed their physical place as a means of changing their inner space — their attitude of devotion. This outward movement into nature can make us receptive to the inner movement of the Holy Spirit. It creates openness to hear and think differently. We've crossed this "geography of the spirit" when we get away for a while. Somehow we become a little more open to hearing and thinking differently.

Time to listen

On one of my longer hikes I trekked up Kilarney Ridge in northern Ontario. In this treeless expanse the trick was to spot the next pile of rubble which marked the trail, and walk a straight line toward it. Viewed from above, I was the lone hiker playing a game of "dot-to-dot." My backpack felt light compared to the disappointment I was lugging up that ridge. But it was there I learned that the Word through creation not only instructs as a sermon; it also heals like a song. God can love us through the land and use it to restore our souls. The beauty drew me out the way God drew Job beyond the boundary of his skin, past his pain.

In God's longest monologue he didn't speak to Job as we might expect. He didn't answer Job's questions about suffering. He didn't lead Job to think great theological thoughts. Instead, God simply directed Job to look at strange and wonderful things in the creation. Job was in distress and God took him on an interpretive nature hike! Then Job said, "I had heard of you with the hearing of my ears, but now my eyes have seen you." Job hadn't really *seen* God any more then I did on Kilarney Ridge. He only heard a voice from the whirlwind beckoning him to look at the glory spread out around him.

On the ridge I felt nudged to pray with my eyes open. I looked up to where the white pines flagged by northern winds unfurled a claim to the mount — and to my heart. Climbing the final slope, I turned around and was confronted with the La Cloche mountains and the rhythmic shoreline of Kilarney Lake. My mind became dizzy and halted. It reeled like a wild stallion pawing at the stunning grandeur. Words, too, became scrambled and hushed. Then like Job, who was silenced by what God had showed him, I placed my hand over my mouth. Creation spoke. It was time to listen.

John Krueger is a career counsellor and teaches composition and study skills at Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont. He is also a freelance writer.

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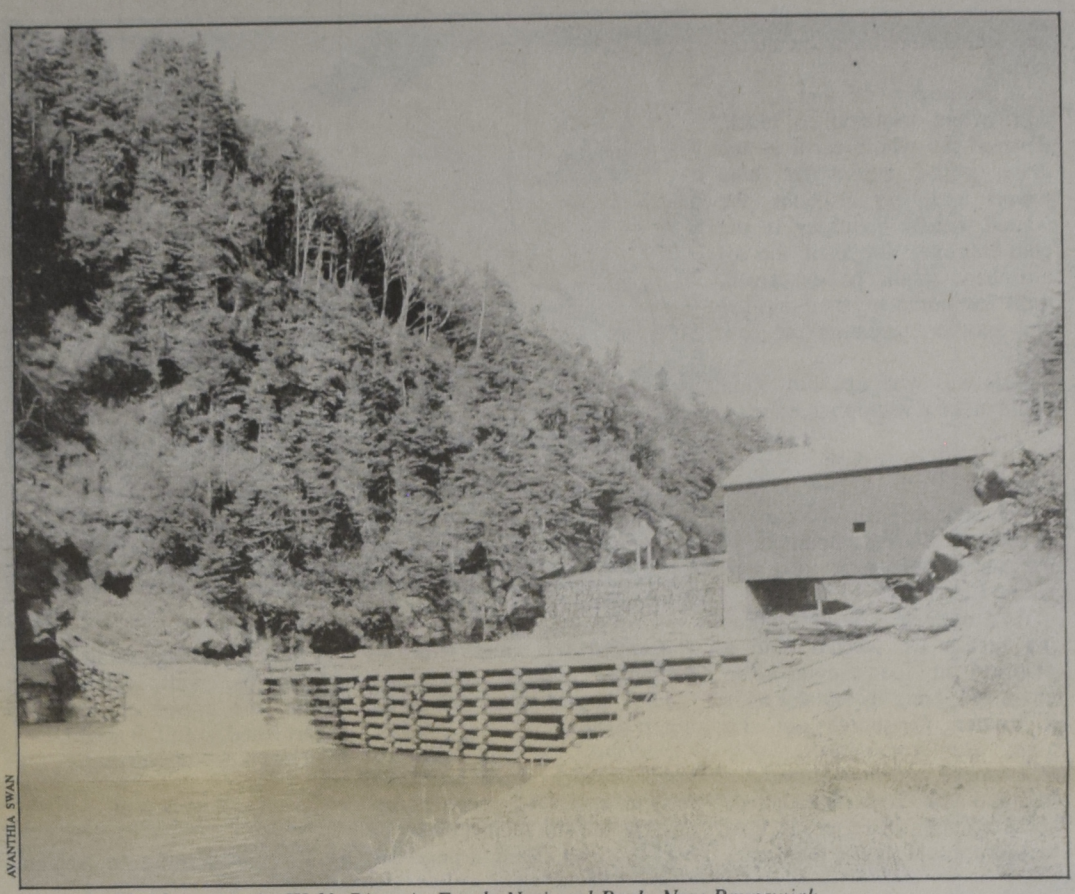
Vacation Issue 1998

'How great thou art'

Didy Prinzen

"Oh Lord, my God, when I in awesome wonder, consider all the works Thy hands have done...." I softly began to sing the words that filled my heart because I could hold them back no longer. My companions joined in.

We were slowly driving through Fundy National Park, climbing and descending the winding roads that were lined on both sides with majestic evergreens. After having made our way through a picturesque covered bridge that crossed a swift stream, we stood and watched the water playfully jump over and swirl around the rocks on the shallow bottom until it tumbled over the edge of a cliff to somewhere deep below.



AVANTHIA SWAN

A covered bridge over the Wolfe River in Fundy National Park, New Brunswick.

'God, his Son not sparing'

Then, from a plateau, we saw the great waters of the Atlantic Ocean stretching out in front of us as far as the eye could see. We watched in awe as the tide slowly moved in. It seemed as if the Creator had just been at work yesterday. No signs of a fallen world here, of pollution, sin or sadness. Except for us, four sinful human creatures. And the thought of what we humans have done with God's beautiful world made me momentarily sad.

However, another fragment of that hymn that seemed to accompany me this day sprang to my mind. "But when I think that God His Son not sparing...." Yes, God had sent his *Son*! We were redeemed people. This fallen world has been saved.

And while I stood there, between the sea he made and the earth he formed, I experienced a sense of freedom as never before. God allowed me a glimpse of a renewed, perfect earth on which we his people would live in everlasting peace with him. What a future awaits us! "My God, how great thou art!"

At dusk, we saw a blue heron, silhouetted in a perfectly still lake, bidding us farewell on our way out of the park.

Didy Prinzen lives in Orono, Ont.

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Aug. 16 – Aug. 21---------- Grades 4 to 6
Aug. 23 – Aug. 28 ---------- Grades 10 to 12

Wilderness Camps	**Munchkin Camps**
Grades 9 to 12	Grades 1 to 3
July 5 – July 10	July 12 – July 14
July 12 – July 17	July 15 – July 17
July 19 – July 24	Aug. 2 – Aug. 4
July 26 – July 31	Aug. 5 – Aug. 7
Aug. 2 – Aug. 7	Aug. 9 – Aug. 11
Aug. 9 – Aug. 14	Aug. 12 – Aug. 14
Aug. 16 – Aug. 21	**Special Needs Camps**
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Vacation Issue 1998

This, too, was worship

Lee Hill-Nelson

At least three times have I seen crowds of people cease talking and stand amazed as if transcended. No word was said, no song sung, yet a presence of something outside ourselves was there.

Bill, my husband, and I were on a boat loaded with people who had come to Rockport, Texas, to see the whooping cranes in their winter home. In early morning, a relaxed happy group strained their eyes for a glimpse of what was to be.

Captain Brown had the reputation for being the best boat skipper to find the cranes so we had chosen to board his boat. He turned off the motor.

"We'll just wait," he said. "They're usually seen in this area."

Water lapping at the sides of the boat was the only sound we heard then. Many birds winter in this area, but our interest at this moment was only whooping cranes.

"Look, there's one," whispered Captain Brown. The news quietly travelled from one person to the next until all eyes and binoculars turned toward the crane.

A wing-span of four to six feet, white trimmed in black, covered the whole earth as the crane glided across the blue waters until out of sight. We waited, hardly breathing in the cold morning air, as if the atmosphere might be destroyed, until another rose, then another and another, repeating the gestures.

This was worship. Only God could make a whooping crane.

❀ ❀ ❀ ❀ ❀

"Be sure to go to the canyon at sunrise," said my neighbor as we packed our car for a trip to Grand Canyon.

At 5 o'clock in a cool morning breeze we walked onto a platform at the canyon. The moon still hung in the sky as if it wanted to stretch out the night. The canyon wall to the east looked brown and bare in half-darkness. Tourists gathered, speaking in hushed tones as if to be heard might shatter the scene.

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A whooping crane in flight.

I recalled our time with the whooping cranes.

Eyes turned to the east, waiting in silence.

Suddenly, a tiny slice of bright orange burst over the canyon wall. We gazed enraptured as the sun inched bit by bit over the wall. Then, a huge ball of fiery red-orange sat in the sky above the wall. Glory burst loose, the crowd clapped. My heart filled so full, it ached.

This, too, was worship.

❀ ❀ ❀ ❀ ❀

At mid-morning in September, Bill and I walked with my sister, Gerry, and her husband, Paul, in Butchart's Gardens, Victoria, British Columbia. What had been a gravel quarry is today filled with flowers, bridges, ponds, arbors, waterfalls. Everywhere red, yellow, blue, purple, pink, all colors, all sizes of flowers waft fragrances in the air.

Tourists quietly wandered about. Some stood close by admiring a patch of flowers, whispering in foreign languages. I remembered the whooping cranes and sunrise at the Grand Canyon. My soul was at peace.

It's something we couldn't explain, nature so beautiful only God could create this garden, tended by humankind.

"This is my idea of Paradise," whispered Gerry.

I've heard heaven described as having pearly gates and streets of gold. I want it to look like Butchart's gardens.

This, too, was worship.

Lee Hill-Nelson is a freelance writer who lives in Waco, Texas.

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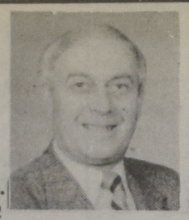

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Anniversaries

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Psalm 143:10

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RICHARD and TRIX
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Sid, Theresa, Evan
George & Sandra Bouwma
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Linda & Tom Bree
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Karleen, Kristen, Kaneesha, Kira
At home with Jesus: Linda Anne (daughter) and Matthew (grandson).
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Best wishes only.
Home address: 7 Marley Cr., Jarvis, ON N0A 1J0

Lisse Brampton
the Neth. Ont.
1938 May 4 1998

With much joy and thankfulness to the Lord, we celebrate the 60th wedding anniversary of our parents, grandparents and great-grandparents,

PETER and SUZANNA
DEKOTER
(nee IMANSE)

We thank them for their love, support and guidance, and pray that the Lord will continue to bless them with health and His special peace.
With love and congratulations from:
Larry & Willy DeKoter — London, Ont.
Rodney & Marietta, David & Tina, Kenneth & Leona (Bryce, Stacy, Melissa)
Tony & Mary DeKoter — St. Thomas, Ont.
Jeff & Kathy, Susan, Janis
Gremar & Case Van Wyk — Grand Rapids, Mich.
Stephen, Christina, Rebecca
An open house will be held on Saturday, May 2, 1998, from 2-4 p.m., D.V., at Harmony Hall, Holland Christian Homes, Brampton, Ont.
Best wishes only, please.

Anniversaries

1938 May 6 1998
"O give thanks to the God of heaven, for his steadfast love endures forever" (Ps.136:2b).
With gratitude to God, we are pleased to announce the 60th wedding anniversary of our parents, grandparents and great-grandparents

EGBERT and HENDERIKA
BUITENHUIS
(nee FINKE)

It is our prayer that the Lord will continue to bless them and be near to them.
With much love and appreciation from your family,
Herman & Martha Buitenhuis — Rockwood, Ont.
Margaret & Chris Merkus — Cambridge, Ont.
Bert & Ria Buitenhuis — Guelph, Ont.
Jenny & Mark Fodchuk — Oakville Ont.
Brenda & Bill MacPhee — Eganville, Ont.
Henry & Pauline Buitenhuis — Kitchener, Ont.
Brian & Theresa Buitenhuis — Burlington, Ont.
Jenny Buitenhuis — deceased
19 grandchildren and 21 great-grandchildren.
Come celebrate with us at an open house on Saturday, May 9, 1998, from 2-4 p.m., at Victoria Park Golf Club West, 1159 Victoria Rd. S., Guelph, Ont.
Home address: #603-72 Woodlawn Rd. E., Guelph, ON N1H 7W7, Phone (519) 822-0339.

Heteren Hamilton
the Neth. Ont.

50 years
April 28

Wedding text: "but one thing I do, forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead" (Phil.3:13b).
With gratitude and thanksgiving in our hearts, we announce the 50th anniversary of the wedding of

JOHN and GERTIE
JANSEN VAN DOORN
(nee SLOOTWEG)

We thank God for the years He has given them, the great blessing they have been to us and our children, and the wonderful truths he has passed onto us through them.
Congratulations and love from your children and grandchildren:
Casey — Hamilton
Corinne & Dick Kersten — Niagara-on-the-Lake
Derek,
Michael & Laura (girlfriend), Julie
Gerry & Gayle — Hamilton
Nathan, Laura, Lindsey, Erika
Lois & Bill Cave — Kitchener
Melanie, Tyler, Shelby, Spencer
Open house will be held on Saturday, May 2, 1998, from 2-4 p.m., at Wellingstone: 1415 Upper Wellington St. Hamilton, Ont.
Best wishes only, please.
Home address: #201-1415 Upper Wellington St., Hamilton, ON L9A 5E8

Anniversaries

1958 April 18 1998
We are pleased to announce the 40th wedding anniversary of our parents

MARTHA and CORNELIS
DE BOER
(nee VAN VEEN)

Wishing them happiness and continued blessing are their children and grandchildren,
Jim — Goderich
Marjorie de Boer & Bill Loghrin — Thamesford
Marcie, Daniel, Thomas
Stephen — Toronto
Catherine de Boer & Ed Vanderkloet — Kitchener
Abigail
Friends and relatives are invited to attend an open house at Trinity Chr. Ref. Church, 321 Suncoast Drive East, Goderich, Ont., on April 18, 1998, from 2-4 p.m.
Home address: R.R. #2, Clinton, ON N0M 1L0

Hamilton Hamilton
1958 April 25 1998
With thankfulness and praise to God, we joyfully announce the 40th wedding anniversary of our parents

HENRY and ANN DEGROOT
(nee SCHOTSMAN)

We thank them for their love, support and guidance over the years and we pray that God will continue to bless them with health and happiness.
Steve & Diane DeGroot — Mount Hope
Ryan, Jenna
Debbie DeGroot — † 1966
Wendy Meijaard — † 1992
John & Jeannette Meijaard — Guelph
Stephanie, Debbie, Jenny
Marlene & Peter Knevel — Hamilton
Shae-Lynn
Irene & Dan Huinink — Hamilton
Address: 54 Winchester Blvd., Hamilton, ON L8T 2M8

St. Catharines Beamsville
1958 May 3 1998
With joy and thankfulness to the Lord we will celebrate with our parents

DURK and IRENE
PIERSMA
(nee SIDERIUS)

the occasion of their 40th anniversary.
We pray the Lord will continue to bless them with many more years together.
With love from your children,
Harry & Mary Piersma
Art & Janet Piersma
Al & Deb deRoo
Tony & Eileen VanGeemen
and 14 grandchildren.
We invite you to attend an open house in their honor on Saturday, May 9, 1998, from 2:30-4:30 p.m., at Heritage School, 2850 4th Avenue, Jordan, Ont.
Home address: 4902 Cameron Avenue, Beamsville, ON L0R 1B5

Classifieds

Anniversaries

1948 April 14 1998

With praise and thanksgiving to our Lord for His love and faithfulness, we wish to announce the 50th wedding anniversary of our parents, grandparents and great-grandparents,

MORRIS and TINA THALEN
(nee WOLTING)

May God continue to bless you Dad and Mom, Opa and Oma.
Congratulations from your family.
Henry Thalen — Chilliwack, B.C.
Martain & Kathy Benjamins — Sarnia, Ont.
Sip & Marg Algra — Abbotsford, B.C.
Ray & Gerda Elgersma — Hagersville, Ont.
Gerry & Tina Taekema — Ponoka, Alta.
Dan & Freda Haan — Red Deer, Alta.
Tony & Dinah Besteboer — Chilliwack, B.C.
Morris & Sandra Thalen — Ponoka, Alta.
Dear Opa and Oma of 43 grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.
Home address: 7925 Prest Rd., Chilliwack, BC V2P 6B3

Rheden Prince Albert
the Neth. Ont.

1948 April 30 1998

With thanksgiving and joy we give praise to God for His faithfulness to our parents

PIETER J. and LAMKJE
VAN GINHOVEN-DYKSTRA

these past 50 years.
May the Lord continue to bless you both.
Love and congratulations from your children:
Hubert & Linda Van Ginhoven — Uxbridge, Ont.
John & Wilma Van Ginhoven — Hampton, Ont.
Bob McLelland, husband of the late Carol — Ajax, Ont.
Gay & Jake Lootsma — Dorchester, Ont.
Yolanda & Jim Lloyd — Hampton, Ont.
grandchildren and great-grandchildren.
Open house will be held on **Saturday, May 2, 1998**, from 7-9 p.m. at Hope Chr. Ref. Church, 14480 Old Simcoe Rd., Prince Albert, Ont.
Address: 4 Barber St., Box 3262, Prince Albert, ON L9L 1C2

For Rent

For rent: One-bedroom apartment, available June 1, 1998, in **Burlington**, Ont. Furnished or unfurnished.
Call (905) 637-8448

For rent: One-bedroom upstairs apartment, which includes fridge and stove. Located on Seventh St. Louth, near **Jordan**, Ont. Available immediately. For more info. call:
(905) 685-1153

Anniversaries

1948 April 27 1998

"Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer" (Romans 12:12).
With thanksgiving to God for His goodness and faithfulness

ALBERT and ENGELINA
WISSELINK

hope to celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on April 27, 1998. Congratulations, Mom and Dad, Grandma and Grandpa! We love you, we are thankful for you, and we wish you God's richest blessings in the years ahead.
With love from your children and grandchildren:
Henry & Margaret Wisselink — Edmonton, Alta.
Andrea, Erin
Al & Sue Wisselink — Abbotsford, B.C.
Kevin, Brian, Armin
John & Joanne Wisselink — Telkwa, B.C.
Rachel, Justin, Joshua, Reuben, Tiana
Wayne & Judy Wisselink — Pitt Meadows, B.C.
Duane, Nicole
Wendy & John Folkerts — Aldergrove, B.C.
Steven, David, Shannon, Keith
Bruce & Nora Wisselink — Ardrossan, Alta.
Amy, Karyn, Megan, Jason
Address: 13714 McKechnie Road, Pitt Meadows, BC V3Y 1Z1

1958 April 25 1998

With thankfulness to our heavenly Father, we, the children of,

ALE and CHRISTINA
NOORDSTRA
(nee KLINGENBERG)

wish to announce the 40th wedding anniversary of our parents.
Congratulations Mom and Dad (Oma and Pake). We pray that God will be with you in the coming years.
With love:
Chris & Joe Kelly
Jarod, Mara
Gary & Tena Noordstra
Kevin, Jenna
Trish Noordstra
Judy & Ron Rozema
Bryan, Doray, Cameron
Home address: 2277 Maple Grove Rd., Group 1, R.R. #6, Box 22, Bowmanville, ON L1C 3K7.

Personal

I am a **29-year-old woman looking for a Christian man** between the ages of 29-40. I enjoy movies, sports (helps to be a Blue Jay fan), good sense of humor and have a good relationship with the Lord. I will answer all enquiries. Please send letters to **File #2679, c/o Christian Courier, 4-261 Martindale Rd., St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1.**

Obituaries

Utrecht Belleville
the Neth. Ont.

Dec. 28, 1921 - March 19, 1998

MARGARETHA HENDRIKA
BERKHUIZEN
(nee WESTENDORP)

Because He lives, I can face tomorrow,
Because He lives all fear is gone;
Because I know, He holds the future,
And life is worth the living just because He lives.

Loving wife of John Berkhuizen.
Loving mother and grandmother of:
John & Tina Berkhuizen — Willowdale
Ian, Jennifer
Hendrina & Frans Harkema — Stirling
Dean & Angela
Cari-anne and daughter Holly
Janette Berkhuizen (1954-1955)
Fred & Susan Berkhuizen — Belleville
Lynn, Richard (1989), Lora
Janet & Jack Oegema — Bowmanville
Shannon, Veronica (1983-1984), Danielle, Jessica, Sadie
Survived by brother Ralph and Billie Westen in Australia, and many nieces and nephews.
Correspondence address:
435 Massassaga Rd., R.R. #7, Belleville, ON K8N 4Z7

Zwijndrecht Stratton
the Neth. Ont.

March 24, 1912 - March 12, 1998

"Wait for the Lord, be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord" (Ps.27:14).
The Lord took home His child

WILLEM (BILL) ROMYN

Beloved husband for 64 years of Christina (den Boer) Romyn.
Dear father of:
Elsie & George van Dyk — Calgary, Alta.
Gerrit (deceased) & Natalie Romyn — Vancouver, B.C.
Connie & Dan Bruinooge — Morinville, Alta.
Audrey & Norman Dalberg — Escondido, Calif.
Harry Romyn — Pinewood, Ont.
Cornelis (deceased)
Tina & John Douma — Portage la Prairie, Man.
Cornelis William (deceased)
William & Delores Romyn — Stratton, Ont.
Jacklen & Terry (deceased) Laird — Devon, Alta.
Joanne Romyn Vos — Edmonton, Alta.
Also survived by 25 grandchildren, 33 great-grandchildren, three sisters: Hendriecka, Nell, Elsje, and brother Pieter, all of the Netherlands, and numerous nieces and nephews.
He was also predeceased by two sisters: Willemiena and Hillegonda, and one brother Eldert.
Funeral service was held on March 14, 1998, at Emo Chr. Ref. Church, Emo, Ont., Rev. G. Van Smeerdyk officiating.
Correspondence address:
Box 75, Stratton, ON P0W 1N0

Obituaries

Assen Alliston
the Neth. Ont.

March 7, 1998

Don't grieve for me,
God wanted me now,
He set me free.

After a lengthy battle with cancer, God in his infinite wisdom called home His servant, our dear brother and brother-in-law,

JIM (JANNES) JANSSEN

Dear husband of Tini Janssen (nee van Noortwyk), loved father of five children, Opa of nine grandchildren.
May the Lord be with them in this time of loss.
Psalm 23.
Jan & Gre Janssen — Kampen, the Neth.
Andries & Hermien Janssen — Enschede, the Neth.
Henk & Helen Janssen — Brampton, Ont.
Henry & Co Janssen — Vineland, Ont.
Albert & Finy Janssen — Apeldoorn, the Neth.
Tiny Holtrop — Assen, the Neth.

Ten Boer Blyth
the Neth. Ont.

Safe in the arms of Jesus.

On March 23, 1998, the Lord took to himself, our dear mother, grandmother and great-grandmother,

JACOBMINA SIERTSEMA
(nee BLOKZYL)

at the age of 93.
She was predeceased by her husband Albertus Siertsema in 1982.
Loving mother of:
Theresa & Hielke Roetcisoender — Auburn
Murray & Doreen Siertsema — Blyth
Hebo & Margaret Siertsema — Blyth
Greta & Don Greidanus — Londesboro
John & Kathleen Siertsema — Bayfield
Siebolt & Annie Siertsema — Auburn
Tom & Mieneke Siertsema — Owen Sound
Betty & Clarence Baker — Beaverton
Also missed by 34 grandchildren, and 44 great-grandchildren.
The funeral service was held on March 26, 1998, at the Chr. Ref. Church, Blyth, Ont., Pastor A. Van Geest officiated.
Correspondence address:
T. Roetcisoender, Box 44, Auburn, ON N0M 1E0

For Rent

COTTAGE IN HOLTEN
in scenic Holten (Holland).
Contact: **Andy Borger**
(905) 623-6049

Job Opportunities

Babysitter required. Live-in. July-August, in Dunnville, Ont.
Call (905) 774-9998.

Obituaries

Adorp, Gr. St. Thomas
the Neth. Ont.

April 6, 1903 - March 25, 1998

The Lord in his infinite wisdom called home, our dearly loved mother, grandmother and great-grandmother,

HENRIETTE SMIT

Loving wife of the late Thomas Jacob Smit.
Dear mother of:
Cora & Henry Stryker — Kitchener
Kor & Lia Smit — Aylmer
Lloyd & Esperanza Smit — St. Thomas
Henry & Cynthia Smit — St. Thomas
Connie De Bruyne — Union
Annie & Pieter DePooter — Port Lambton
Ralph & Anny Smit — Amstelveen, the Neth.
John & Marie Smit — Springfield
Martin & Maria Smit — Springfield
Jim & Alice Smit — Aylmer
and 40 grandchildren, 55 great-grandchildren.
Predeceased by Tinie and Wout Langeveld, Rinus De Bruyne and one infant son and several grandchildren.
Psalm 25: 4-5.
Correspondence address: Kor Smit, R.R. 4, Aylmer, ON N5H 2R3

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the Neth. Lacombe, Alta.

May 19, 1923 - March 14, 1998

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength" (Deut.6:5).
The Lord called to His eternal home our dearly loved husband, father, and grandfather,

WILLIAM ZUIDHOF

He is lovingly remembered by Hilda Zuidhof.
Pearl & Bill Nieboer — Nobleford, Alta.
Kevin, Rachelle
Peter & Jan Zuidhof — Lacombe, Alta.
Jennifer, Grant, Pamela, Karyn
John & Jacquie Zuidhof — Duncan, B.C.
Joel, Aron, Jesse, Reuben, Jonathan, Heather
Martin & Annette Zuidhof — Lacombe, Alta.
Jessica, Victor, Allison, Ashley, Jeffrey
Teresa & Fred Reitsma — Smithers, B.C.
Renee, Sonia, Trevor, Christiana
Janita (Muff) & Frank Kuipers — Lacombe, Alta.
Ben, Katie, Melissa, Nicholas
Correspondence address:
Hilda Zuidhof, Box 5331, Lacombe, AB T4L 1X1

Miscellaneous

ONE TO ANOTHER
Christian companion magazine.
Hundreds of readers Canada-wide.
Single issue $5.
Write to:
#12 923 2nd Ave. S.
Lethbridge, AB T1J 0C7

Classifieds

Teachers

AYLMER, Ont.: Immanuel Chr. School invites applications for an **opening in a junior grades classroom** due to a maternity leave from September to April with the possibility of becoming full-time. The successful candidate will also teach intermediate music, assist with the school band and conduct the school choir. Send resume package to:

Mrs. Marianne Vangoor
Immanuel Chr. School
75 Caverly Road
Aylmer, ON N5H 2P6

CHATHAM, Ont.: Chatham Chr. High School invites applications for **possible openings** in a combination of at least two of the following areas: math, computer, science, art, French, music and phys.ed. Please send applications to:

Mr. John Van Pelt, Principal
90 Park Ave. E.
Chatham, ON N7M 3V4
Phone: (519) 352-4591
Fax: (519) 352-3476

FT. McMURRAY, Alta.: Ft. McMurray Christian School needs a **teacher for Grade 7/8 and part-time administration** for Sept. 1998. Knowledge of CTS, computers, P.E. an asset. We also need a **teacher for Grade 5/6.** Knowledge of music, French, learning resource an asset. Please address resume to:

Mrs. Saxon Morgan
Ft. McMurray Chr. School
101 Tundra Dr.
Ft. McMurray, AB T9H 5A4
Phone: (403) 743-1079

LONDON, Ont.: London Parental Chr. School invites experienced teachers to apply for a **part-time Kindergarten position** for September. Expertise in music would be an asset. Please send a letter of application, statement of faith and resume to:

Mr. Herb Goodhoofd, Principal
LPCS
202 Clarke Road
London, ON N5W 5E4

We look forward to hearing from you.

TABER, Alta.: Taber Christian School, an interdenominational school, has **two possible openings at the middle/elementary level.** The successful applicants will be committed Christians, knowledgeable about and able to articulate a reformed world and life view and have a strong background in music/French. Experience in P.E., band and/or social studies would also be an asset. Please fax or send your resume to:

David B. O'Dell (Administrator)
4809-60th Avenue
Taber, AB T1G 1E9
or fax to:
(403) 223-4693
Phone: (403) 223-4550

Teachers

LUCKNOW, Ont.: Lucknow and District Chr. School invites applications for a **50% position for the grades 3, 4** starting in September 1998. This position is available for one year. Please direct your resume to:

Lawrence Uyl, Principal
Lucknow & District Chr. School
Box 550, Lucknow, ON N0G 2H0
Phone (519) 528-2016
Fax (519) 528-2095

LACOMBE, Alta.: Central Alberta Chr. High School seeks **two full-time teachers** for 1998/99. Consider joining an encouraging society, which together with an excellent staff, work to provide an education rooted in the Reformed tradition to 120+ high school students. We invite those with experience and/or expertise in computer/business education, and or art/humanities to apply. However, we will consider all applicants who are willing and able to teach a variety of core subjects. An ability and interest in coaching and extracurricular sport would be an asset.

Applicants should preferably be graduates of a Christian college and/or have teaching experience in a Christian high school. Eligibility for an Alberta Teaching Certificate is required. Please send resumes to:

Jack Vanden Pol, Principal
Central Alberta Chr. High School
22 Eagle Rd.
Lacombe, AB T4L 1G7
Phone: (403) 782-4535
Fax: (403) 782-5425
E-mail: cach@telusplanet.net

METCALFE, Ont.: Community Chr. School is accepting applications for a **possible teaching position at the Grade 3/4 level** combined with French. Send applications to:

Beth Ripmeester, Principal
2681 Glen St.
Metcalfe, ON K0A 2P0
Phone/Fax: (613) 821-3669

SMITHVILLE, Ont.: Covenant Christian School invites candidates to apply for a **full-time position in our Grade6/7** classroom for the 1998-99 school year. The ability to teach French, a working knowledge of computer technology, and an interest in sports are required. The ability to play a musical instrument would be an asset. Deadline for applications to be received in our office is April 27, 1998. Please forward your resume to:

Mr. M. Elzinga
Covenant Christian School
6470 Regional Rd. #14
Smithville, ON L0R 2A0
or fax us at
(905) 957-7794

Teachers

MERRITT, B.C.: Maranatha Chr. School, a level 1, 70+ student, K-12 school requires an **experienced Principal/Administrator.**
Also **classroom teachers for grades 7-10.** Must qualify for BC cert. Reply to:

Marg Davis
(250) 378-6700 (eve.) or fax to
(250) 378-6119

NEPEAN, Ont.: Redeemer Chr. High School invites applications for **possible teaching positions** commencing September 1998 in the areas of social studies, French, guidance and computer. Candidates should be mature Christians and qualified teachers who integrate their faith with their subject areas. Please send your application and C.V. to:

Mrs. I. Neutel
Redeemer Chr. High School
82 Colonnade Rd. N.
Nepean, ON K2E 7L2
Phone: (613) 723-9262
Fax: (613) 723-9321

OAKVILLE, Ont.: John Knox Chr. School invites applications for the following positions for the 1998-99 school year:

1. **Primary combined grade maternity leave** beginning September 1998 and extending until March break 1999.
2. **Part-time Grade 6 teacher** for language arts, social studies, science and Bible.
3. **Full-time physical education teacher** with some classroom teaching responsibilities at the upper elementary level.
4. **Possible opening at the Grade 7 or 8 level**; French, computer knowledge and related experience would be a definite asset.

Letters of application and resumes will be accepted until April 30, 1998.

Mrs. L. Keith, Principal
John Knox Chr. School
2232 Sheridan Garden Drive
Oakville, ON L6J 7T1
Fax (905) 829-8056

OSHAWA, Ont.: Immanuel Chr. School has a **part-time teaching position opening in Junior/Intermediate areas**. Applicants with expertise in teaching French and Language Arts will be given special consideration. Applicants with suitable qualifications and a vision for developing a Christian world view in students should apply in writing to:

Stan Baker, Principal
Immanuel Chr. School
849 Rossland Road W.
Oshawa, ON L1H 7K4

Deadline for applications is **April 17, 1998.**

Take action!
Place an ad in our
Business Directory.

Teachers

OTTAWA, Ont.: Ottawa Chr. School is interested in applications for **possible junior and intermediate positions** and a **possible 90% Grade 3 position.** This is to commence September 1998. We have a school of 180 students from Junior Kindergarten to Grade 8. Please submit your resume to:

Mrs. Henni Helleman, Principal
Ottawa Chr. School
2191 Benjamin Ave.
Ottawa, ON K2A 1P6
or fax to:
(613) 722-5836

RENFREW, Ont.: Renfrew and District Chr. School requires a **primary teacher for grades 1 to 4** for the 98-99 school year. This class consists of approx. 12 students. For more information please contact: **Rick or Joyce Hultink at (613) 432-2239.**
Please send your resumes, including your philosophy of Christian education to:

Rick Hultink, Ed. Comm.
P.O. Box 868
Renfrew, ON K7V 4H3

Deadline for applications is May 1, 1998.

WOODBRIDGE, Ont.: Toronto District Chr. High School will have a new **full-time position** available beginning August 1, 1998, **in Physical Education.**
Please send resume, vision statement, and list of references to:

Ren Siebenga
TDCH
377 Woodbridge Avenue
Woodbridge, ON L4L 2S8
E-mail: siebenga@pathcom.com

WOODSTOCK, Ont.: John Knox Chr. School invites applications for a **full-time primary teaching position**. A position in the junior division may also become available. Please send resumes to:

Mr. William Barneveld, Principal
John Knox Chr. School
P.O. Box 243
Woodstock, ON N4S 7W8

Interested in
placing an ad?
Get in touch with us
for details.

Church News

Christian Reformed Church

Calls accepted:
— To Second CRC of Brampton as Chaplain Holland Christian Homes, Brampton, Ont., **Rev. Herman Praamsma** of Immanuel CRC, Brampton, Ont.
— Campus chaplain, Ann Arbor, Mich., **Candidate Amanda Benckhuizen** of Guelph, Ont.

Call declined:
— Mississauga (Clarkson), Ont., **Candidate Martin Benckhuizen** of Guelph, Ont.

New address:
— **Rev. Fred Heslinga**, 10509-69 Street, Edmonton, AB T6A 2S7.

Vacation

GOING TO HOLLAND FOR VACATION?
Why not rent
A BUNGALOW OR APARTMENT in
* Gelderland * Drenthe *
* Limburg * Groningen *
* Friesland *
and visit family and
sight-see at your leisure.
Year-round accommodations.
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more information call
Harold or Nellie at
(905) 985-7891
or fax us at
(905) 985-3007
E-mail:harnel@idirect.com

Birthdays

BRUS:
On Sunday, May 3, 1998, our mother

MRS. ALEIDA BRUS
(nee VAN ARRAGON)

will celebrate her 90th birthday.
We thank God for all these years given her and pray that He will bless mom and continue to keep her in His care.
Her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.
Mom's address is: Shalom Manor, 12 Bartlett Ave., Grimsby, ON L3M 4N5

There was no issue on
April 10, 1998

Classifieds

Personal

Single female, slim, 5'9", happy, content, sense of humor, greater Metro Toronto, **seeks relationship with male**. If you are in your late 30s, early 40s, outgoing, caring, sense of humor, please reply to **File #2680, c/o Christian Courier, 4-261 Martindale Rd., St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1.**

Obituaries

Aalten Owen Sound
the Neth. Ont.
July 12, 1925 - March 28, 1998
"You guide me with your counsel, and afterward You will take me into glory" (Ps. 73:24).
True to His promise, on Saturday, March 28, 1998, our Heavenly Father took home to glory
DIANE KLYN-HESSELINK
following a courageous struggle with a lengthy illness.
Beloved wife for over 47 years of devoted husband
Bill Klyn-Hesselink, Owen Sound.
Dear mother of:
John & Sheila Klyn-Hesselink — Ancaster
Bill & Carol Klyn-Hesselink — Chatham
Wilma & Albert Grin — Georgetown
Brenda & Rob Heyns — Owen Sound
Adored grandmother of 16 grandchildren.
As their wedding text (above) expressed, she walked daily with the guidance of His counsel until her earthly journey was complete.
Correspondence address:
687 11th St. West,
Owen Sound, ON N4K 3T2

Miscellaneous

EN JJ SHOW
Christian TV Entertainment

Times: Vision TV Cable Network
Thursday mornings
6:30 a.m. ET & PT
7:30 a.m. MT & AT
Also CJIL-TV (The Miracle Channel) Lethbridge, Alberta
9:30 a.m. and a repeat in evening
Sponsored by Voortman Cookies

Bed & Breakfast
Niagara Falls, Ont.
Easy walk to the Falls.
Miles of parks with cycle paths. Beautiful rooms, superb breakfast. Dutch spoken.
Day trips planned.
Joan and Mike Havinga
(905) 358-3534. E-mail: mhavinga@freenet.npiec.on.ca

Job Opportunities

Silvercrest Christian School
Wasaga Beach, Ont.

is seeking applications for the definite position of

PRINCIPAL
starting August 1, 1998

Silvercrest Christian School, established in 1978, is an interdenominational school offering an educational program from Junior Kindergarten to Grade 8.
We are seeking a Principal to guide our children in a Christian atmosphere and to direct the operation of our school within both the Christian and the wider community. This position includes both teaching and administrative responsibilities.
Silvercrest Christian School is located in Wasaga Beach, a thriving community, just over an hour from Toronto.
Interested candidates are invited to submit a letter of application and a resume by **April 30, 1998**, to:

SCS Principal Search Committee
c/o Linda Haverkamp
R.R. 1, Phelpston, ON L0L 2K0
Fax: (705) 322-0060

Silvercrest Christian School is a member of the Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools.

PACIFIC CHRISTIAN SCHOOL
Victoria, B.C.

Come to the beautiful West Coast and join a dynamic and enthusiastic staff in an exciting, interdenominational K-12 school system growing to 750 students in the fall.

Teachers required for 1998/99 school year:
* 2-3 Elementary classroom teachers (grades 1-5)
* One part-time elementary French & Music
* Secondary Art and Home Economics
* Secondary Industrial Education
* Secondary Girls Counsellor
* Secondary Band/Choir

Teachers must be committed Christians and certifiable by the BC College of Teachers.
Send letter of application, resume and statement of faith to:

Bill Helmus, Elementary Principal
Pacific Christian School
671 Agnes Street
Victoria, BC V8Z 2E7
Phone: (250) 479-9365
Fax: (250) 479-3685

John Messelink, Secondary Principal
Pacific Christian School
654 Agnes Street
Victoria, BC V8Z 2E6
Phone: (250) 479-4532
Fax: (250) 479-3511

Orangeville Christian School
invites applications for the position of

TEACHING PRINCIPAL

as well as **possible teaching positions in the primary and junior divisions.** Please submit your resume to:
Mr. Bill Prins, Chairman
Orangeville Chr. School
P.O. Box 176, Orangeville, ON L9W 2Z6
(519) 941-3381

Job Opportunities

COMMUNICATIONS ASSOCIATE
CRCNA — Canada

The Christian Reformed Church in North America (CRCNA) is currently seeking applicants for a **full-time position of Communications Associate**. The position is a **short-term (6 months) assignment**, commencing May 15, 1998. The qualified candidate will have demonstrated experience in the production of printed materials, promotional and educational, with the ability to manipulate text and engage in creative design. The position responsibilities include assisting with the production of audio-visual and video materials and the promotion of educational materials to appropriate church groups and schools.

A university or college diploma in journalism, communication, public relations or graphic arts with experience in business, government or volunteer agency information bureau is desired. Knowledge of the Christian Reformed Church and its ministries an asset. Computer and effective language skills essential.

For consideration, submit your resume and a letter stating your interest by **April 24, 1998**, to:

Director of Personnel
Christian Reformed Church in North America
P.O. Box 5070, Stn. LCD1
Burlington, ON L7R 3Y8
(905) 336-2920/Fax (905) 336-8344
E-mail: colemann@crcna.org

Rimbey Christian School

located in central Alberta, is accepting applications for **a high school/junior high position** starting September 1998.
The Rimbey Christian School is a vibrant, interdenominational school with 150 students K-12. We are looking for a dynamic Christian individual in the sciences, computer studies and social areas.
Please send resumes to:

Mr. Henry Vandermeer, Principal
Rimbey Christian School
Box 90, Rimbey, AB T0C 2J0
Phone/Fax: (403) 843-3904
E-mail: richrsc@telusplanet.net

PRINCIPALS

The Edmonton Society for Christian Education has openings for **two principals.**
We are seeking visionary and dedicated individuals to provide educational leadership for our Northeast Campus (K-9, 270 students) and our West Campus (K-9, 370 students). The successful applicants will help us translate our reformational education vision into an increasingly-effective, Christ-centred school system for students, teachers, and supporting community, **commencing Sept. 1, 1998**. We expect applicants to be eligible for an Alberta Teaching Certificate. The salary will commensurate with qualifications and experience.
Please send your resumes and a brief statement of your philosophy of Christian education before **April 30, 1998**, to:

Hans Van Ginhoven, Superintendent
Edmonton Christian School, 13470 Fort Road Edmonton, AB T5A 1C5
Phone: (403) 476-6281; Fax: (403) 478-1728.

Classifieds

Employment Wanted

Seeking co-op education placement.
Deaf student in final year at Rochester Institute of Technology needs **co-op term (June-Sept.) with company to complete credits for Diploma in Imaging Technology**. This unpaid position is to give the 23-year-old male student practical experience in graphic/photo production (any kind), Web page design, videos and photography, editing and captioning. Communicate by writing and/or American Sign Language. Has own LapTop. **Contact Derek Jagt at (905) 823-3020 or fax (416) 366-0601.**

For Rent

For rent: Sunny 2-bedroom, 1000 sq. ft. self contained apt. on the main floor in a new home. **10 min. south of Peterborough**, Ont. Suitable for mature adult(s). A great place to retire! No smoking! $700.00 per month. Utilities included. Gardening opportunity available.
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Miscellaneous

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- Small administration fee

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CEAF
CHRISTIAN ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE FOUNDATION
P.O. Box 20099
Upper James Postal Outlet
Hamilton, Ontario
L9C 7M5
TEL: (905) 648-9899
FAX: (905) 648-2110

Send your questions to
Peter and Marja
Confidentiality assured.

Job Opportunities

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Director of Public Relations:
possible full-time position beginning summer/fall 1998. Responsibilities involve the maintenance of a comprehensive public relations program, including media relations, publications, advertising, marketing management, and sports information. Bachelor's degree and relevant experience required; advanced degree and/or significant public relations experience preferred.

Public Relations Assistant:
definite half-time opening beginning summer/fall 1998. Qualifications: Bachelor's degree in a related area and strong writing skills required; relevant work experience and graphic design, photography, journalism, or other applicable skills a plus.

Applicants for these positions must be able to communicate an understanding of and commitment to the Reformed Christian educational mission of Dordt College. Send letter of application and resume to: **Lyle A. Gritters, Vice President for College Advancement**, at the address below. Applications will be accepted until the positions are filled.

Dordt College strongly encourages applications from women, minorities, and disabled persons.

DORDT COLLEGE
498 4th Avenue NE • Sioux Center, IA 51250-1697 • Fax: 712-722-6066

SECONDARY PRINCIPAL
Mount Vernon, Washington

Mount Vernon Christian School, a 400-student K-12 school located in picturesque Skagit Valley near the Pacific coast about midway between Seattle and Vancouver, B.C., has an opening for the position of **Secondary Principal** for the 1998-1999 school year. The Secondary Principal leads the educational program of our Middle School (Grade 6-8, about 100 students), and our High School (Gr. 9-12, about 100 students). The Secondary Principal is a member of an administrative team which also includes the Elementary Principal/Superintendent, the School Counsellor, and the Director of Community Development. Part-time teaching may be included in the assignment. We will consider revising the assignments of the administrative team members to accommodate a well-qualified candidate.
Inquiries or applications may be directed to:
Dr. Ray Klapwyk, Elementary Principal/Superintendent, Mount Vernon Christian School, 820 W. Blackburn Road, Mt. Vernon, WA 98273; Phone: (360) 424-9157; Fax: (360) 424-9256.

Miscellaneous

Paris Gospel Text Gifts and Crafts

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cassettes, Bibles, videos and gifts for every occasion.

Proprietor: Jennie Berg

Events

IGS
The Institute for Christian Studies

Wycliffe College

For more information contact John Franklin:

Email: franklin@ultratech.net

Phone: 416-979-2331 ext. 241

Toll-free: 1-888-326-5347

COURSES
- When Women Read the Old Testament, July 13 – 24
- Beyond Homelessness: Theology in a Postmodern World, July 13 – 24
- The Letter to the Colossians, July 13 – 24
- Thinking About God, July 20 – 31

WORKSHOPS
- The Pilgrimage of Bruce Cockburn, July 17 – 18
- Proclaiming Jubilee: Pipe-dream or Audacious Hope? July 25

Ontario Christian Male Chorus Association

The "Crusaders" Male Chorus hosts this year's

"Men in Praise Festival"

The festival will be held , D.V., in the
Agincourt Pentecostal Church
2885 Kennedy Road, Toronto

Saturday, April 25, 1998, 7:30 p.m.

There will be
Seven Christian Male Choruses
from southern Ontario participating together with about **350 men** blending in harmony. This annual event is always filled to capacity. We recommend to book early. See one of your male choir members in your church, or phone John Ponsen at (519) 941-7036, or e-mail: jjponsen@beeline.ca

Tickets at the door.

50th Anniversary

Immanuel Christian Reformed Church of Brampton, Ont., will be celebrating its 50th anniversary in 1999. To commemorate the occasion we are writing a history of our church. If any former members or pastors have any interesting information, mementos or pictures they could let us use, we would be pleased to hear from you. Please write or call:

Mrs. Tena Van Schepen
4 Shirebrook Court, Brampton, ON L6X 1Z2
Phone: (905) 457-5148

Classifieds

Events

Calendar of Events

Please submit only brief items. Placement is subject to space availability. Lengthy, multiple-event announcements will be rejected. We reserve the right to edit the material and to charge a nominal, per issue fee per item inserted.

April 18 Conference on Alcoholism sponsored by Family Outreach Ontario. From 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Bethel CRC, 716 Classic Dr., **London**, Ont. Pre-register before April 6. Call Jane de Haan at (905) 679-6490 (#).

April 18 Liberation Choir in concert, with Willem van Suijdam (conductor), Lucas Chorosinski (accompanist), and Colleen Greidanus (soloist). At 8 p.m., St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church (Church & Victoria), **Belleville**, Ont. Info.: (705) 745-1403 (#)

April 18 "Embraced by the Light," a conference on the awareness and prevention of abuse. From 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. at Westmount CRC, 405 Drury Lane, **Strathroy**, Ont., featuring the "Covenant Players Drama Team" in the morning. Afternoon keynote by Annette Dekker. Reg. fee $15. Phone (519) 245-0253 or (519) 245-0139 (#)

April 18 Spring concert by the OCMA (Leendert Kooij, director), 8 p.m., Mountainview CRC, **Grimsby**, Ont. Info.: (416) 636-9779.

April 19 Christian Choir New Life in concert, 7 p.m., Mennonite Brethren Church (339 Scott St.), **St. Catharines**, Ont. Admission free.

April 19 Dutch worship service led by Rev. John D. Hellinga, 3 p.m., CRC, **Ancaster,** Ont.

April 24 25th anniversary spring concert by the St. Thomas Ladies' Choir "Gloria in Excelsis." Director: Lasana Barrow. Accompanist: Lana Tan, with special guests. At 8 p.m., Grace United Church (Balaclava St.), **St. Thomas**, Ont. Freewill offering (#).

April 24 Jonathan Oldengarm's harpsichord graduation recital, 8 p.m., Maureen Forrester Hall, Wilfrid Laurier University, **Waterloo**, Ont. Info.: (519) 338-3214.

April 24-25 Fifth Worship Conference, Friday, 8 p.m. to Saturday, 4 p.m., Zion CRC, 409 Adelaide Ave.E., **Oshawa**, Ont. Plenary speakers: Revs. Karl House, Arlan Koppendrayer and Dr. Henry Wildeboer. Info.: (905) 436-3255, Fax (905) 436-3691. E-mail: zioncrc@planeteer.com (#)

April 25 Spring concert by the OCMA (Leendert Kooij, director), 8 p.m., Port Perry United Church (294 Queen St.), **Port Perry**, Ont. Info.: (905) 986-5856 (#)

April 25 Fortieth anniversary of the Calvinettes at Bethel CRC, 345 Elizabeth St.E., **Listowel**, Ont. Former Calvinettes and counsellors are invited! Info.: (519) 291-9904 (#)

April 25 "Men In Praise Festival," featuring seven southern-Ontario male choruses, totalling appr. 350 men blending in harmony! Hosted this year by the Crusaders Male Choir. At 7:30 p.m., Agincourt Pentecostal Church, **Agincourt**, Ont. Order tickets now from a male chorus member or John Ponsen (519) 941-7036, or John Hekman (416) 223-6047 (#).

April 25 The Woodstock Dutch Theatre Group presents the three-act comedy "Voor Hete Vuren," 8 p.m., Adam Scott Collegiate, **Peterborough**, Ont. Tickets/Info.: (705) 799-6919 (#)

April 26 See Darrin Berg live at the Maranatha Chr. Ref. Church, **Bowmanville**, Ont., at 6 p.m. (evening youth service). Info.: (905) 264-0676 (#)

April 26 Christian Choir New Life in concert, 7 p.m., Cornerstone Community Church (1570 Niagara Stone Rd.) **Virgil**, Ont. Admission free.

Apr. 28-May 5 Redeemer College announces its Choral Concert Tour in British Columbia (watch for further announcements). First performance at the RC Auditorium, **Ancaster**, Ont., on **April 15** at 8 p.m.

April 30 Fortieth anniversary dinner and celebration, 6:30 p.m., John Knox Chr. School Society, **Wyoming,** Ont. Info./tickets: (519) 845-3226 or 845-3129 (#)

May 2 Pastors & Deacons' Breakfast sponsored by Hamilton's Homestead Residential & Support Services. 8:15 - 10:30 a.m., Immanuel CRC, West 5th & Mohawk, **Hamilton**, Ont. Guest speaker: Dr. Tony Carr, who will speak on schizophrenia and depression and appropriate pastoral responses. Info.: Jantina De Vries at (905) 389-3510.

to May 9 The Redeemer College Theatre Arts Dept. presents Raymond Louter's play "Stranger in the Land." April 27, 28 - **London**, Ont., (519) 672-8800; Apr. 29 - **St. Thomas**, Ont., (519) 672-8800; May 1, 2 - **Sarnia**, Ont., (519) 344-7469; May 4, 5 - **Blyth**, Ont., (519) 523-9300; May 6 - **Owen Sound**, Ont., (519) 371-2833; May 7 - **Lindsay**, Ont., (705) 324-9111; May 8, 9 - **Mississauga**, Ont., (905) 306-6100. Evening shows at 8 p.m. Matinee shows on May 2 and 9 at 2 p.m.; May 5 at noon (#).

May 22-24 "Caring for God's Creation," a conference of faith and the environmental professional, featuring Dr. Calvin DeWitt and Dr. Fred Van Dyke. At the King's University College, **Edmonton**, Alta. Info.: (403) 465-8304, fax (403) 465-3534. E-mail: jmathis@kingsu.ab.ca (#)

May 28 40th Anniversary of the Bethel CRC, **Dunnville**, Ont. Former members are welcome to attend the special thanksgiving worship service on May 31. Info.: (905) 774-7285 (#)

May 31 Dutch worship service led by Rev. Harry A. Vander Windt, 3 p.m., CRC, **Ancaster**, Ont.

June 8-11 Eighth Annual 4-Day Evening Walk (Hikers' Festival), at the Royal Botanical Gardens, **Burlington**, Ont. Registration at RBG Centre each day at 4:30 p.m. For info. Call Bill Haartman at (905) 383-6319.

June 10 "Hollandse Dag," 10 a.m., Community Centre, **Moorefield**, Ont. Info.: (519) 638-2053.

Sept. 25 Toronto District Chr. High School 35th Anniversary Celebration Dinner! All friends of TDCH are invited to attend this event at the school, **Woodbridge**, Ont. Tickets $35, order through the school office beginning May 1, 1998. Tel. (905) 851-1772.

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...of bel één van de volgende nummers:
(616) 245-9911, (616) 531-4046/res.

John Knox Memorial Christian School
Fruitland, Ont.
invites All to come and
GET TO KNOW US!

OPEN HOUSE
Wednesday, April 22, 1998
9 a.m. - 12.00 noon

See our students and teachers in action.
7 p.m. - 9 p.m.
Tour the school. Get all your questions about JKMCS answered by our Principal and parents.
Busing to Beamsville, Grimsby, Stoney Creek and adjacent mtn. areas.
795 Hwy. #8, Fruitland, Ont.
(Beside Stoney Creek City Hall)
Inquiries (905) 643-2460.

By Grace Alone

The musical debut of **Christian contemporary musician Darrin Berg** has now sold thousands of copies all across North America. Darrin Berg has been featured in *Christian Courier, Images*, CJMR-AM 1320, CJIL (The Miracle Channel), City-TV and has performed in over 100 churches and schools across Canada.
See Darrin Berg live at the **Maranatha Chr. Ref. Church, Bowmanville, Ont., on Sunday, April 26, 1998, at 6 p.m., in the evening youth service.**
To order "By Grace Alone," send $14.99 (plus $3.00 for shipping) to **D. Berg Music, 70 Chavender Place, Woodbridge, ON L4L 1K5 or call (905) 264-0676.**

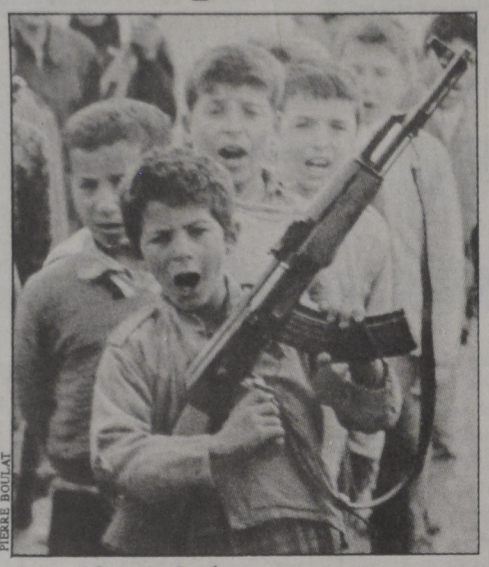
Government aims to protect children in armed conflict

Alan Doerksen

OTTAWA — Over the past decade, civil wars around the world have caused the deaths of two million children, while a million more have been orphaned or separated from their parents, according to Diane Marleau, minister responsible for la Francophonie.

Because of this and the increasing use of children as soldiers, Marleau and Foreign Affairs Minister Lloyd Axworthy teamed up in early April to announce that Canada will support four projects to protect children in armed conflicts around the world.

"In supporting these initiatives ... Canada seeks to protect these children from abuse, exploitation, and violence by giving them a chance at life," said Marleau.



PIERRE BOULAT

Boy soldiers in Jordan

Deprived of rights

"The use of children as soldiers has escalated worldwide due to the advent of light weapons technology, the rise of intrastate conflict, and the increase in guerrilla and rebel forces," said Axworthy. Such situations "deprive children of their right to fully realize their mental and physical potential, and ... contravene a basic human right," he said.

According to a government press release, Canada will provide $650,000 to four projects to help child soldiers in Liberia, Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo (formerly Zaire). The Liberia project, supported by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), aims to demobilize and reintegrate 800 child soldiers into their families and communities by providing financial and technical support such as skills and literacy training.

This project will also assess the psychological condition of the children and support their psychological recovery. CIDA's contribution is $200,000.

A second project in northern Uganda, also funded by $200,000 from CIDA, will assist between 5,000 and 8,000 children who have been abducted by rebel forces. The main objectives are to stop the abduction of children, to support advocacy work under way for their release and to trace and resettle children who escape captivity.

The $200,000 project in the Democratic Republic of Congo will assist national and provincial authorities to demobilize 1,500 child soldiers, aged nine to 16, and reintegrate them into their families and society. It will help these children to complete their primary school studies and get professional skills training.

The government will also provide $50,000 to Child Soldiers Coalition, an international non-government organization that raises awareness of child soldiers involved in wars.

Funding for these four projects was provided in the February 1998 federal budget.

A recent United Nations study describes child soldiers as boys and girls with weapons, as well as children who "follow or serve armies" as fighters, sexual slaves, cooks, porters, messengers or spies.

Axworthy, who initiated the recent global ban on landmines, also announced in April that his department would take action to help eliminate abusive forms of child labor. This year, CIDA will contribute $500,000 to the International Labor Organization's Statistical Information and Monitoring Program on Child Labor, which will gather data on child labor in about 40 countries.

Amnesty International helps persecuted Christians

Alan Doerksen

OTTAWA — As Amnesty International celebrates its 25th year in Canada, it is focusing increased attention on the plight of people of faith who are being persecuted for their religious beliefs.

Jean Elder is co-ordinator of Amnesty's Religious Communities Program, which encourages faith communities to become involved with Amnesty's work.

Several Christian denominations participate, especially United, Roman Catholic, Anglican and Lutheran, says Elder. "These mostly are social action groups or missions committees."

Through the newsletter "Religious Action" Elder keeps these groups informed about Christians or others who are being persecuted for their faith.

Elder is focusing on collecting signatures of endorsement for the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which has its 50th anniversary this year. One reason for this is "educating people and making them aware again about the declaration," she explains. Later, Amnesty will present these signatures to the United Nations.

Article 18 of the declaration connects with the mandate of the Religious Communities Program: "Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion: this right includes freedom to change his/her religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his/her religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance."

Despite the declaration's defence of religious practices, many believers continue to be persecuted and have become prisoners of conscience.

In China, "there is great persecution of Christians," says Elder. For example, one Chinese Roman Catholic church held a sunrise service on a mountain recently. Its members were arrested because the mountain was not an official place of worship.

Amnesty also reports that a Protestant preacher for Shanghai, Xu Guoxing, was detained while preaching to a small group at a private home. He was assigned to three years of "re-education through labor", without charges or trial, for "disturbing public order." His family was only informed when they telephoned the police after Xu had gone missing.

Catholic priests in the Mexican state of Chiapas have also faced persecution in recent years, reports Elder. "In one case, priests were driving in a car and the car was riddled with bullets."

Recent Amnesty "Urgent Action" reports detail the plight of two Catholic bishops in Chiapas — Samuel Ruiz and Raul Vera. Ruiz has been accused by a member of the Mexican Armed Forces of being involved with an armed opposition group. But Ruiz and Vera were attacked by such a paramilitary group when traveling through Chiapas last November.

In November, Ruiz's sister, Maria, was attacked in her house and reportedly hit repeatedly with a hammer, causing skull fractures. She is now in hospital in serious condition.

"Such attacks have occurred in response to [the Bishops'] impartial role in seeking a peaceful solution to [the] appalling human rights situation in the region," reports Amnesty. "Amnesty International fears that human rights defenders in the region may be at serious risk of human rights violations, including extrajudicial execution, torture and 'disappearance', should they continue their work on behalf of indigenous communities in the region."

In this case, Amnesty has urged concerned Christians and other supporters to contact state officials in Mexico, the Mexican Ambassador to Canada, and Mexican human rights organizations to express their concerns and request action to protect the bishops and others connected with them.

Action brings results

Such action often brings good results, according to Elder. Just over one year ago, a Cuban Pentecostal minister was imprisoned because "he held a meeting at his house and he wasn't supposed to," she says. Elder contacted eight or 10 social action groups and asked them to write letters on behalf of the minister.

"There was such an outcry he was released the following May," she reports.

The Canadian Section of Amnesty International was formed in May 1973 in St. Lambert, Quebec. Its first president was Dr. John Humphrey, a law professor at McGill University who was one of the authors of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was adopted by the United Nations in 1948.

News Digest

Hacker targets porn dealers

CALIFORNIA — Christian Valor is a 28-year-old computer hacker with a mission: to track down traders in child pornography over the Internet and mess with their computers. So far, he has ruined the hard drives of 30 such people, reports *Newsday*.

"It's completely illegal," says Valor, who works as a computer security consultant to companies and government agencies. But he asserts, "I've been told by enough cops they're never going to arrest me for doing this. I've been told by judges they'd find a way to throw it out every time. You find me a jury anywhere in the world that is going to convict me for invading a child pornographer's computer and destroying it."

Porsche toasters race on

WASHINGTON, D.C. — If you consider driving a Porsche to be an incredible sensation, the Porsche toaster could be for you. This lean, mean toaster will cost $175 (US), and is part of a new line of appliances from the company that created the classic roadster, reports the *Washington Post*.

Made of thick brushed aluminum, the toaster has aerodynamic styling and a quartz heating element that cuts down waiting time. It doesn't rudely thrust bread slices in your face, but lifts them gently for a smooth, well-calibrated browning experience.

Sticking to it

WATERDOWN, Ont. — For 33 years, Gary Duschl, of Waterdown, has been making a chain of gum wrappers which is now more than 26,000 feet (8,000 metres) long. Duschl, who works at a recycling plant, started linking chewing gum wrappers in high school, when it was a craze. "For awhile, everyone was doing it, and then most people stopped. I didn't," he explains.

As a result of his hobby, Duschl has been listed in the *Guinness Book of World Records* since 1995, under "fantastic feats." Ripleys, the "believe it or not" people, have offered to buy the chain for one of their Odditorium museums, but Duschl isn't selling just yet.